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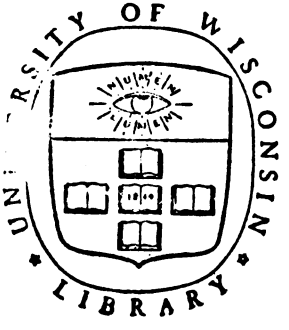

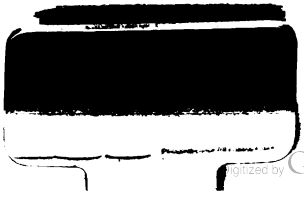

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THE

WORKS

OF

JOHN ROBINSON,

PASTOR OF THE PILGRIM FATHERS.

WITH

A MEMOIR AND ANNOTATIONS

BY

ROBERT ASHTON,

SECRETARY OF THE CONGREGATIONAL BOARD, LONDON.

VOLUME II.

LONDON:

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A

JVSTIFICATION OF SEPARATION

FROM THE

CHURCH OF ENGLAND:

AGAINST

MR. RICHARD BERNARD HIS INVECTIVE,

INTITVLED

THE SEPARATIST'S SCHISME.

BY JOHN ROBINSON.

"And God saw that the light was good, and God separated between the light and between the darkness."—GEN. i. 4.

"What communion hath light with darkness?"—2 COR. vi. 1 .

ANNO D. 1610.

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EDITORIAL NOTICE.

The following elaborate vindication of the principles and practices of the Separatists, is a reply to a small treatise by the Rev. Richard Bernard, then Vicar of Worksop, Notts, and, subsequently, Rector of Batcombe, Somerset. The exact title of Mr. Bernard's work is as follows:—

"Christian Advertisements and Counsels of Peace. Also Dissuasions from the Separatist's Schism, commonly called Brownisme, which is set apart from such truths as they take from us and other Reformed Churches, and is nakedly discovered, that so the falsity thereof may be better discerned, and so justly condemned, and wisely avoided. Published for the Benefit of the Humble and Godlie Lovers of the Trueth. By Richard Bernard, Preacher of God's Word. At London: imprinted by Felix Kyngston, 1608."

It is dedicated to "Sir George Saintpoll, and his vertuous Ladie, the Ladie Saintpoll;" who appear to have been his early friends and patrons, and by whom he had been supported during his residence in the University of Cambridge. Dated from Worksop, in Nottinghamshire, June 18.

While preparing his "Justification," Mr. Robinson received, at Leyden, Mr. Bernard's reply to two works which had been written against the same publication; one entitled "Counterpoyson, by Henry Ainsworth, 1608;" and the other, "Parallels, Censures, and Observations, by John Smyth, 1609." Mr. Bernard's defence is entitled, "Plain

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Evidences: the Church of England is Apostolical; th Separation Schismatical. Directed against Mr. Ainsworth the Separatist, and Mr. Smyth the Se-Baptist: both o them severally opposing the booke called the 'Separatist Schism.' By Richard Bernard, Preacher of the Word o God at Worksop. Set out by Authoritie, 1610."

Mr. Robinson incorporated with his reply to Mr. Bernard's first publication, a reply to the second, calling them respectively the "first," or the "former," book, and the "second," or the "latter," book. Appended to Mr. Bernard's "Christian Advertisements," &c., is a tract, published under the following title, "Certain Positions held and maintained by some Godly Ministers of the Gospel against those of the Separation; and namely against Barrowe and Greenwood." Whence these "Positions" were obtained, and who the "Godly Ministers" that wrote them, Mr. Bernard does not state: they were evidently "Comformable Puritans," and appear to have been well known to Mr. Robinson.

Mr. Bernard was a zealous and devoted minister of the Gospel, and a distinguished Puritan, but deficient in the moral courage requisite to constitute him a reformer. He vacillated between the Church and the Separation, often avowing his determination to leave the Establishment, and on one occasion actually resigned the living of Worksop; but afterwards repented, subscribed again, was restored to his preferment, and continued a Churchman till his death, which occurred in 1641. Mr. Smyth, in his "Parallels," page 5, describes him as "changeable as the moon, mutable as Proteus, and variable as the chameleon."

He published numerous works, consisting of catechisms, treatises, expositions, &c.; but those by which he is chiefly known are his "Isle of Man," an allegory; and "Thesaurus Biblicus, seu Promptuarium Sacrum," a valuable and elaborate compendium of Bible references and explanations;

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and "The Bible Abstract and Epitomie," generally bound with the "Thesaurus," in a small folio volume.

The "Justification" is a full and detailed reply to the arguments of Mr. Bernard. Exhibiting slightly the logomachy of the age, it is nevertheless a most readable and interesting performance. Dr. Campbell, in his "Analysis," thus describes it:—

"They who want logic will find it here. The writer enters, at great length, into the kingdom of Christ in most of its aspects, viewing it in relation to baptism, to communion, to polity, and to the kingdoms of this present world. It does admirable execution, both against the Church of England and the Church of Rome. The ample resources of the author upon these subjects are made strikingly manifest. There are few points affecting the great subject which are not more or less discussed or referred to. The question of the keys, and the ministry of ecclesiastical law, both as they affect the true church and the Church of England, are most ably discussed. A perusal of this work, from the novelty of the aspects in which many things are presented, will be found an exercise of no ordinary interest, and will very materially help the candid student to sound the depths of subjects on which he may not hitherto have thought with sufficient closeness, or attained conclusions sufficiently clear and convincing."

In its original form, it is one unbroken chapter from beginning to end. To render it more easy of reference, as well as to bring out the subject more distinctly to the view of the reader, it has been divided into chapters and sections. A few notes have been supplied, for the further illustration of the text.

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PREFACE.

TO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

Two several treatises,* good reader, have been formerly published by several men in answer to Mr. Bernard's book, yet have I thought it meet to add a third, not as able to speak more than they, but intending something further: namely, an examination of the particulars, one by one, that so in all points the salve might be answerable unto the sore; applying myself, therein, to such a familiar and popular kind of defence, as Mr. B. hath chosen for his accusations, where the former answers only intended a summary discovery of the insufficiency of his probabilities to dissuade from, and reasons to disprove the things he opposeth.

The zeal Mr. B. manifesteth, here and everywhere, both in word and writing is exceeding great, as all men know. And surely fervent zeal in God's cause is a temper well-befitting God's servants: neither is there any more bastardly disposition to be found in a Christian, than indifferency in religion. It makes no matter of what religion the man is that is indifferent in it: for Christ will spue out of his mouth, as loathsome, the lukewarm, whether wine, or water. Rev. iii. 16.

Yet as the case of religion is most weighty, so is the affection of zeal in it most dangerous, if it be either pretended only, and not in truth; or preposterous and not according to knowledge.

And, therefore, as there is singular use of this fiery zeal for these frozen times of ours, so are we to take great heed

* "Counterpoyson," by Henry Ainsworth, 4to. 1608. "Parallels, Censures, and Observations," by John Smyth, 4to. 1609.

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that our fire be kindled at the "fire of the altar which came from heaven." Levit. ix. 24; 1 Kings xviii. 38. For as Luke, Acts ii. 3, speaks of "fiery tongues which came from heaven," so doth James, iii. 6, speak of "a tongue which is set on fire of hell."

And this we are the more carefully to mind, not only because almost all men have taught their tongues, in the general, to speak goodly words, and that zealously also for advantage; but more specially and with respect to the business in hand, for that many of the weaker sort have their tender hearts rather affrighted from the truth of the Lord by the deep protestations and obtestations of their guides, than any way established in those perplexed paths, wherein they walk with them, by sound reasons.

Now as the Lord is to be entreated for those people, that he would vouchsafe them wise and stable hearts, that they may "try all things and hold that which is good," 1 Thess. v. 21, and neither suffer themselves to be withheld nor withdrawn from the truth by any such semblances of zeal, or other passion, though never so solemn and seeming never so sincere, so for their better direction herein, I have thought it not amiss to commend unto their godly hearts two or three considerations, by way of caution, in this case.

First, therefore, it must be considered that there are some of that boisterous and tempestuous disposition that they can do nothing calmly or a little; their unruly affections which should follow after, leisurely, do force on so violently their understanding, will, and whole man, as there is no stay with them; but in all their motions they are like unto those beasts, which for the unequal length of their hinder legs cannot possibly go but by leaps. Such a stormy nature, with a very little zeal amongst, may make a great stir in the world, but is justly to be suspected. And that especially (which is the second caution) in such men, as are suddenly carried, and as it were transformed from one contrary to another, without either competent time or means. A suspicious course; for all things ordinarily whether in grace, or nature, are wrought by degrees, and the passage from one extreme to another without due means, as it can hardly be sound, so can it not possibly be

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unsuspected. Now there are many men to be found which are violent in all things, but constant in none. And though all things be with them as the figs in Jeremiah's two baskets, Jer. xxiv. 1—3, the good, very good, and the evil, very evil, yet are they ever shifting hands out of the one basket into the other. To-day they will lift up and advance a cause and person to heaven, and to-morrow they will throw down both it and him to the lowest hell. It is good to have such men in a godly jealousy, and their zeal with them: and that chiefly (which I desire may be observed in the third place) when this their zeal rises and falls as the times serve. Almost all men will, at times, manifest zeal, but the most have this gift withal, that they will be sure to take the strongest side, or that part, at least, which hath some hope of prevailing. And so whilst there remains hopes of bearing things over at the breast, they are very forward and fervent in their courses; but when that hope shaketh, their edge is off, and they turn their backs shamefully upon the truth, yea and ofttimes, their faces against it.

And hereupon it comes to pass that many, formerly great advancers of the cause of reformation, have of late times not only foully forsaken, but violently opposed the same both in us, and them also amongst themselves, which do in any measure desire it, publishing their books unto the world so filled with empty words and swelling vanities, as they not only betray the weakness of their cause, but the evil and corrupt disposition of their hearts; as rather striving to manifest their servile affections for insinuations into the favours of the mighty, than to bring anything of weight for the conviction of the adversary. The application of this I leave to the godly and wise reader, as he shall see just cause.

And so leaving those things which are more general, I desire, in particular, and for the present purpose, that the Christian reader take knowledge of this one thing, that as the pretence of zeal in the forward ministers against all corruptions is as a thick mist, holding the eyes of many well-minded from seeing the truth; so the person with whom I now particularly deal, trusts to this insinuation above all others, conveying himself under this colour into

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the hearts of the simple, and hereby making way most effectually, not only for his sage-seeming counsels and advertisements, for the quenching of their affections towards the truth: but also for his idle guesses and likelihoods, with such personal comparisons, and imputations, as wherewith his book is stored, to alienate men's hearts from it.

But the godly reader is to consider that "to accept the person in judgment is not good," Prov. xxiv. 23, especially in the cause of the Lord, and that "the faith of our glorious Lord Jesus is not to be held in respect of persons," James ii. 1: but that the naked and simple truth is to be inquired after, with an impartial affection. And then the Lord which gives a single heart to seek after it, will give a wise heart to find it out. Matt. vii. 7. Only let men take heed they be not as Pilate, asking "What is truth?" John xviii. 38, and turning their backs upon it when they have done: nor having found it, as Orpah did to Naomi, forsaking her, weeping. Ruth i. 14.

And for myself, as I could much rather have desired to have built up myself and that poor flock over which the Holy Ghost hath set me in holy peace, as becometh the house of God, "wherein no sound of axe or hammer or other tool of iron is to be heard," 1 Kings vi. 7, than thus to enter the lists of contention, so being justly called to contend for the defence of that truth upon which this man, amongst others, lays violent hands, I will endeavour in all good conscience, as before God, so to free the same, as I will be nothing less than contentious in contention, but will count it a victory to be overcome in odious provocations and reproaches, both by him and others.

And so desiring as earnestly the Christian reader, into whose hands this my defence shall come, to manifest unto me such errors in the same, if by the Word of God they may so be found, as to receive from me such truths, as are therein contained, I leave the due trial to that alone touchstone, and commit the blessing to the Lord who alone giveth wisdom, and is able to make wise to salvation.

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INTRODUCTION.

CERTAIN OBSERVATIONS UPON THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY: AND PREFACE TO THE READER.

First, I desire it may be observed by the reader how Mr. Bernard styleth the worshipful personages, under the wing of whose protection he shroudeth his papers, Christian professors. A title peculiar to some few in the land, which favour the forward preachers, frequent their sermons and advance the cause of reformation. Such persons are commonly called amongst themselves, professors, virtuous and religious, and, thereby, distinguished from the body of the land, which make no such profession, and are therefore accounted, and justly, profane, and without religion, and that as roundly by Mr. B. as by any other in the land. But it seemeth he had forgot both his Epistle and whom, both he in it, and others everywhere, call professors for distinction's sake, when he wrote his book; for in it* he makes all the kingdom professors at a venture, and Christian professors I hope he meaneth.

Thus those whom he severeth in the Epistle, he confounds in the book. And let him well consider how he can quit himself either from flattery in the one, or from untruth in the other.

And where, Mr. B., in the body of the Epistle, you seat yourself in the midst between "the schismatical Brownist," as you charitably term him, and "the Antichristian Papist, the one snatching on the right hand, and the other on the left," it is something which you say, and more belike than you are aware of.

Fitly may you be seated in the midst betwixt both, being indeed a minglement and compound of both, and well may both snatch at you, and yet neither do you wrong, if neither

* pp. 112, 113.

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require more than their own. Justly may the Papists challenge from you that stinted service book, devised Ministry, Antichristian Hierarchy, and Babylonish Confusion which you have stolen away from them, as Rachel did her father's idols, though she covered them never so close. Gen. xxxi. 19, 34. And justly also may we challenge from you such godly people as you fraudulently detain, and such truths of doctrine as you teach, as being the peculiars of the true church: as the holy vessels were of the temple, though violently, with the people, carried to Babylon and there kept. Jer. lii. 17, 18.

But if you will still halt betwixt both, as Israel did betwixt God and Baal, and carry in your right hand many evangelical truths with us, and in your left many antichristian devices with the Papists, no marvel though both parties remain unsatisfied; neither must you be offended, though the Papists, for the truths you hold with us, account you heretics, nor though we, for the devices you retain with them, call you antichristian. 1 Kings xviii. 21. And so you see your middle standing betwixt them and us more ways than one.

And thus much of the Epistle dedicatory. In the next place I come to the Preface; where amongst other just complaints of the iniquities of the times, you reckon, and that worthily, as the most dangerous, "Atheistical security and carnal living under a general profession," to which purpose you allege 2 Tim. iii. 1—5; and so instance in your English people. This place of Timothy alone, had you well weighed, and thoroughly improved, especially the fifth verse, where separation from such persons, as having a show of godliness do deny the power thereof, as you confess the English people do, is expressly commanded, it would either have stopped your mouth from reproaching us, as you do, for separation, or else have opened the mouth of the most simple reader to reprove your vanity, as God did the mouth of the ass to reprove Balaam.

The next thing I observe is how vauntingly you bring as challengers into the lists, Mr. Gyshop, Mr. Bradshaw,*

* Unreasonableness of the Separation made apparent by an Examination of Mr. Johnson's pretended "Reasons," published anno 1608. By William Bradshaw, A.M. 4to. Dort, 1614.

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Dr. Alison,* and other unnamed ministers, all which you say are unanswered by us. And no marvel, for sundry of their writings never came to our hands, and besides it were a more equal and compendious way for these men to take up the defence of their church's cause, where their fellows have forsaken it, and left it desolate, than thus to make new challenges, though in truth with the same weapons (it may be new furbished over) wherewith the other have lost the field. Yet are their books, and, by the grace of God assisting, shall be answered in particular as they come to our hands, and are thought worthy answering: though in truth it were no hard thing for our adversaries to oppress us with the multitude of books, considering both how few and how feeble we are in comparison, besides other outward difficulties, if the truth we hold, which is stronger than all, did not support itself.

The difference you lay down, in the next place, touching the proper subject of the power of Christ, is true in itself, being rightly understood, and only yours, wherein it is corruptly related, and specially in the particular concerning us, as, that where "the Papists plant the ruling power of Christ in the Pope; the Protestants in the Bishops; the Puritans," as you term the reformed churches and those of their mind "in the Presbytery;" we whom you name "Brownists," put it in the "body of the congregation, the multitude called the church:" odiously insinuating against us that we do exclude the elders in the case of government, where, on the contrary, we profess the bishops or elders, to be the only ordinary governors in the church, as in all other actions of the church's communion, so also in the censures. Only we may not acknowledge them for lords over God's heritage, 1 Pet. v. 3, as you would make them,† controlling all, but to be controlled by none; much less essential unto the church, as though it could not be without them; least of all the church itself, as you and others expound Matt. xviii. But we hold the eldership, as other ordinances given unto the church for her service, and so

* A plain confutation of a treatise of Brownism, published by some of that faction, entitled a "True Description of the Visible Church," &c. By Dr. R. Alison. 4to. London. 1590.

† p. 101.

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the elders or officers "the servants and ministers" of the church, the wife, under Christ her husband, as the Scriptures expressly affirm. 2 Cor. iv. 5; Col. i. 25. Of which more hereafter.

And where, further, you advise the reader to "take from the jay other birds' feathers," that is, as you expound yourself, "to set us before him as we differ from all other churches," therein you make a most inconsiderate and unreasonable motion.

If a man should set the Church of England before his eyes, as it differeth but from the reformed churches, it would be no very beautiful bird. Yea what could it in that colour afford, but Egyptian bondage, Babylonish confusion, carnal pomp, and a company of Jewish, heathenish, and popish ceremonies? Whatsoever truth is in the world, it is from God, and from him we have it, by what hand soever it be reached unto us. "Came the word of God unto you only?" 1 Cor. xiv. 36; and unto it we have good right as the Israel of God, unto whom he hath committed his oracles. Rom. iii. 2.

Towards the end of the Preface you do render two reasons upon which you do adventure to deal against us as you do, the one "confidence in your cause," the other "the spiritual injury which some of late have done you," "in taking away part of the seal of the ministry." Touching the first: as it is to us, that know you well, no new thing to see you confident in all enterprises; so doth it much behove you to consider, how long and by what means you have been possessed of this your confident persuasion. I could name the person of good credit and note, to whom upon occasion you confessed, and that since you spake the same things, which here you write as confidently as now you write them, that you had much ado to keep a good conscience in dealing against this cause, as you did.

But a speech of your own uttered to myself (ever to be remembered with fear and trembling) cannot I forget, when after the conference passing betwixt Mr. H. and me, you uttered these words, "Well, I will return home, and preach as I have done, and I must say as Naaman did, 'The Lord be merciful unto me in this thing:'" and thereupon

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you further promised without any provocation by me or any other, that "you would never deal against this cause, nor withhold any from it:" though the very next Lord's-day, or next but one, you taught publicly against it, and so broke your vow, the Lord grant, not your conscience.

And for the seal of your ministry, deceive not yourself and others; if you had not a more authentic seal in your black box to show for your ministry at your bishop's visitation, than the converting of men to God, which is the seal you mean, this seal would stand you in as little stead, as it doth many others, which can show as fair this way as you, and yet are put from their ministry notwithstanding. And will you charge your bishops and church representative to deal so treacherously with the Lord, as to put down his ministers and officers which have his broad seal to show for their office and ministry? What greater contumely do these vipers, these "schismatical Brownists" lay upon your church than you do herein?

The Church of England acknowledgeth no such seal as this is. The bishops' ordination and licence, conformity unto their ceremonies, subscription to their articles, devout singing and saying their service-book, is that which will bear a man out, though he be far enough either from converting, or from preaching conversion unto any.

And here I desire the reader to observe this one thing with me. When the ministers are called in question by the bishops, they allege unto them their former subscription, conformity in some measure, at least their peaceable carriage in their places; but when they would justify their ministry against us, then their usual plea is, they have converted men to God, herein acknowledging, to let pass their unsound dealing, that we respect the work of God's grace in any, at which they know the bishops and their substitutes, if they should plead the same with them, would make a mock for the most part.

I do most freely acknowledge the singular blessing of God upon many truths taught by many in the land, and do and always shall, so far, honour those persons as the Lord hath honoured them herein. But that the simple conversion of sinners, yea though the most perfect that ever was wrought, should argue a true office of ministry, the

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Scriptures no where teach; neither shall I ever believe without them.

This scripture, 1 Cor. ix. 1, 2, is most frequently alleged for this purpose. But as unsoundly as commonly. For if simple conversion should argue an apostleship, then should a common effect argue a proper cause, an ordinary work an extraordinary office: for the conversion of men is a work common to extraordinary and to ordinary officers, yea to true and false officers, yea to such as are in no office at all, as hereafter shall appear.

And what could be more weakly alleged by Paul to prove himself no ordinary but an extraordinary officer, an apostle, which was the thing he intended, than that which is common to ordinary officers with him? Might not the Corinthians easily have replied, Nay, Paul! it follows not, that you are an apostle immediately called and sent by Christ, because you have begotten us to the Lord, and have been the instrument of our conversion, for ordinary ministers, pastors, and teachers called by men, do beget to the Lord, as well as you.

The bare conversion of the Corinthians, then, is not the seal Paul speaks of, but, together with it, their establishment into a true visible church, and that, with such power and authority apostolical, as, wherewith, Paul was furnished by the Lord. Of which more hereafter.

But "the father of these children," you say, "you are, which thus unnaturally fly from you, and whereof we so injuriously have deprived you," in which respect also you make this your hue and cry after us and them, for through the gospel you have begotten them.

And have you begotten them unto the faith, as Paul did the Corinthians? and are you their father, as Paul was the father of the Corinthians? Then it must needs follow that before you preached the gospel unto them, and thereby begot them to the Lord, they were in the same estate wherein the Corinthians were before Paul preached unto them, that is unbelievers, and without faith, and so were to be reputed. And how then true matter of the church, for which you so much contend?

Besides, these your begotten children were baptized long before you saw their faces, some twenty, some thirty, some

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forty years. Now this their baptism was true baptism, and so the true seal of their forgiveness of sins, and new birth, as you affirm and prove, p. 119, and this, their seal of the new birth hath stood good upon them all this while, visibly and externally, and yet after all this you preach unto them and beget them anew visibly and externally, for only God knoweth that which is true within. You have begot them through the gospel.

Behold a monstrous generation, a man begetting children twenty, or thirty, or forty years after they be born. If Nicodemus had heard of this, he might well have said, "How can these things be?"

Lastly, if you be by your office the father of these children, as Paul was of the Corinthians by his, where is, then, that your rod of correction which Paul shakes at his children? 1 Cor. iv. 21. Doth any law, either Divine or human, deny a father liberty to correct his own children? Or, are you one of these simple fathers of whom yourself speak, "that can beget children but not bring them up"? This rod it seems appertains to both their and your reverend fathers the bishops, who only know how to use it.

To conclude the Preface. In acknowledging, as you do in the end of it, "that some things in the book may seem to the Christian reader to be written in the gall of bitterness," and yet suffering them so to pass, with an excuse of your intent, as herein you manifest no good conscience, choosing rather to excuse so great an evil than to reform it: so neither take you any likely course for the good of them with whom you deal, whose recovery, if they be fallen, you should rather have attempted in the bowels of mercy than in the gall of bitterness.

And so, I come to the parts of your book as they lie in order.

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CHAPTER I.

MR. BERNARD'S COUNSELS DEBATED.

Of the Author's Advertisements, called by him Christian, and Counsels of Peace.

THE subject whereof Mr. Bernard treats in this place, being peace, is very plausible, the name amiable, the thing both pleasant and profitable. And as God is the God of peace, 2 Cor. xiii. 11; 1 Thess. v. 23, so are not they God's children, nor born of him, which desire it not; yea even in the midst of their contention.

But as all vices use to clothe themselves with the habits of virtues, that, under those liveries, they may get countenance and find the more free passage in the world, so especially, in the church all tyranny and confusion do present themselves under this colour, taking up the politic pretence of peace, as a weapon of more advantage wherewith the stronger and greater party useth to beat the weaker. The papists press the protestants with the peace of the church; and for the rent which they have made in it, condemn them beyond the heathenish soldiers, which forbore to divide Christ's garment; as deeply do the bishops charge the ministers refusing conformity and subscription, and both of them, us. But the godly-wise must not be affrighted either from seeking or embracing the truth, with such buggs* as these are, but seeing "the wisdom which is from above, is first pure, then peaceable," James iii. 17, he must make it a great part of his Christian wisdom to discern betwixt godly and gracious peace, and that which is either pretended for advantage, or mistaken by error, and so to labour to hold peace in purity. Let it then be manifested unto us, that the communion which the Church of England hath with all the wicked in the land, without separation, is a pure communion; that their service book devised and prescribed in so many words and letters to be read over and over, with all the appurtenances,

* Or bugbears.

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is a pure worship ; that their government by national, provincial, and diocesan bishops according to their canons, is a pure government, and then let us be blamed, if we hold not peace with them in word and deed ; otherwise, though they spake unto us, never so oft, both by messengers and mouth of peace, and again of peace as Jehoram did to Jehu, 2 Kings ix. 22, yet must we answer them in effect, as Jehu did Jehoram, What peace whilst the whoredoms of the mother of fornicators, the Jezebel of Rome, do remain in so great number amongst them?

And I doubt not but Mr. Bernard, and a thousand more ministers in the land, were they secure of the magistrate's sword, and might they go on with his good licence, would wholly shake off their canonical obedience to their ordinaries, and neglect their citations and censures, and refuse to sue in their courts, for all the peace of the church which they commend to us for so sacred a thing. Could they but obtain licence from the magistrates to use the liberty which they are persuaded Christ hath given them, they would soon shake off the prelates' yoke, and draw no longer under the same in spiritual communion with all the profane in the land, but would break those bonds of iniquity, as easily as Samson did the cords wherewith Delilah tied him, and give good reasons also from the Word of God for their so doing. And yet the approbation of men and angels, makes the ways of God and works of religion never a whit the more lawful, but only the more free from bodily danger. Whereupon we, the weakest of all others, have been persuaded to embrace this truth of our Lord Jesus Christ, though in great and manifold afflictions, and to hold out his testimony, as we do, though without approbation of our sovereign, knowing that, as his approbation in such points of God's worship as his Word warranteth not, cannot make them lawful ; so neither can his disallowance make unlawful such duties of religion, as the Word of God approveth, nor can he give dispensation to any person to forbear the same. Dan. iii. 18 ; Acts v. 29.

These things I thought good to commend to the reader that he may be the more cautious of this and the like colourable pretences, wishing him also well to remember, that peace, in disobedience, is that old theme of the false

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prophets, whereby they flattered the mighty, and deceived the simple. Jer. vi. 14, and viii. 11.

SECT. I.—FIRST CLASS OF COUNSELS.*

Let us now come to the consideration of the counsels themselves so friendly given, and so sagely set down. And therein to approve what is good and wholesome, to interpret in the best sense, what is doubtful, and to pass by unrequited such contumelies as wherewith Mr. B. reproacheth us, as in all places, so here in his rhyming rhetoric, wherein he labours to roll even as may be, betwixt the atheistical securitant and anabaptistical puritant, the careless conformitant and the preposterous reformitant, and so forth, as the rhyme runneth, I will come to those ten rules or canons prescribed by him, pp. 3—5, for the preservation of peace in the church or state ecclesiastical; for that alone we oppose, humbling ourselves under the hand of the magistrate as much, and more truly than himself.

1. "Uphold the manifest good therein."

A man upholds that which is good most naturally, by his personal practice of it, and actual communion in it: and thus we ought to maintain every good thing in our places, if sin lie not in the way betwixt us and it. But since by the confusion which is upon the face of the earth, good and evil are ofttimes so intermingled, as that men cannot touch that which is good, but some evil will cleave unto their fingers, when this so falls out, then have we a dispensation from the Lord to forbear even that good, which without sin cannot be practised. Rom. iii. 8. And yet then also we must acknowledge that good thing to be as it is, in what person or estate soever, and so uphold it.

And, lastly, so far as possibly we can, we must sever and select the good from the evil, and so even in our practice also uphold and maintain that good, being so severed, whereof whilst it was commingled with the evil, we could have no lawful use.

And all these ways we uphold whatsoever manifest good

* Designed to show, "How a man ought to carry himself in a Christian state."

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we know in the Church of England: whether doctrine, ordinance, or personal grace, to our utmost.

We do acknowledge in it many excellent truths of doctrine, which we also teach without commixture of error, many Christian ordinances which we also practise being purged from the pollution of antichrist, and for the godly persons in it, could we possibly separate them from the profane, we would gladly embrace them with both arms.

But being taught by the apostle speaking but of one wicked person, and of one Jewish ordinance, that "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump," 1 Cor. v. 6; Gal. v. 9, we cannot be ignorant how sour the English assemblies must needs be: neither may we justly be blamed though we dare not dip in their meal, lest we be soured by their leaven.

The second and third rules follow, which for order sake I will invert, setting the latter in the former place.

2. "Bear with lighter faults for a time, till fit occasion be offered to have them amended."

No sin is light in itself, but being continued in, and countenanced, destroyeth the sinner. Matt. v. 19.

It is the property of a profane and hardened heart evermore to extenuate and lessen sins.

Though the bearing and forbearing not only of small, but even of great sins also, must be for a time, yet it must be but for a time, and that is, whilst reformation be orderly sought, and procured, Lev. xix. 17. But what time hath wrought in the Church of England, all men see, growing daily by the just judgment of God, from evil to worse, and being never aforetime so impatient either of reformation, or other good, as at this day.

A man must so bear an evil, as he be no way accessory unto it, by forbearing any means appointed by Christ for the amending it.

3. "The manifest evils labour in thy place, by the best means, to have them amended peaceably."

This is not sufficient nor enough, except our places be such and we in such churches, as, wherein, we may use the ordinary means Christ hath left for the amendment of things; otherwise our places and standing themselves are unwarrantable, and must be forsaken. And this I desire

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may be well considered by all such, whether ministers or people, as know and acknowledge that Christ requireth of them further duties, for the amendment of evils, than their very places will give them liberty to perform.

The fourth and fifth and sixth canons,* may be received without danger, the seventh not so.

7. "Let the corruption of the person, and his lawful place, be distinguished: and where person and places are not so lawful, and in the proposed end not against thee, wisely labour to make them for thee: and make that good of them thou canst, and wholly condemn not that ministry which a godly man may make for good."

We may not communicate at all in that ministry, which is exercised by an unlawful person or in an unlawful place, though God may bring good out of it, lest we do evil that good may come thereof, which is damnable. Rom. iii. 8.

And if that be true, which the most forward profess and do hold, that the approbation and acceptation of the people give being to the ministry, it concerns the people carefully to see unto it, that they accept not of, nor communicate with any unlawful person in an unlawful place, lest thereby they set up, or give being unto his ministry, and so be deep in his transgression.

The eighth and nine rules,† I pass over as being without

* 4. "Likelihoods of evil, make them not apparent evil, by ill interpretation, where neither the state intendeth it, nor so maintains it.

5. "Doubtful things take in the better part: it is ever charity.

6. "Judiciously discern between the abuse of a thing, and that which may be well used: lest in abhorring the abuse, thou also do utterly condemn the thing itself and the use thereof."

† 8. "Pattern not a monarchy to an oligarchy, or any other state, aristocracy or democracy: neither let (as thou supposest) the well-being of a foreign state make thee unthankful for the present good thou dost enjoy, and to loathe thine own being, lest malcontentedness break into contention, and so thou lose that good thou hast, and procure the increase of evil, which thou dost dislike.

9. "In thy zeal for religion against corruption, let the Book of God, well understood, be thy warrant; and in thy hatred against wrongs in the commonwealth, let the knowledge of the law and the equity thereof move thee to speak: this is religion: this is reason. But beware of superstition, for so beginning of uncertainty, thou mayest lose the fruit of thy labours, and be condemned as a busy meddler and contentious."

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exception. Only I see not upon what occasion the author should thus disorderly shuffle into this controversy, which is merely ecclesiastical, such considerations, as in the former of these two rules and in many other places, he doth concerning the frame and alteration of civil states, except he would either insinuate against us that we went about to alter the civil state of the kingdom; or at least, that the alteration of the state ecclesiastical, must needs draw with it, the alteration of the civil state; with which mote the prelates have a long time bleared the eyes of the magistrates. But how deceitfully, hath been sufficiently manifested, and offer made further to manifest the same by solemn disputation.*

And the truth is, that all states and policies which are of God, whether monarchical, aristocratical or democratical, or how mixed soever, are capable of Christ's government. Neither doth the nature of the state, but the corruption of the persons, hinder the same in one or other.

10. "Refuse not to obey authority in anything wherein there is not to thee manifestly known a sin to be committed against God: let fantasies pass: be more loth to offend a lawful magistrate, than many private persons. Where thou canst not yield, there humbly crave pardon; where thou canst not be tolerated, be content with correction for safety of conscience."†

Authority indeed is to be obeyed in all things, if they be good, actively, and by doing them; if evil and unlawful, passively and by suffering with meekness for righteousness'

* The Assertion:—Supposed to refer to "Reasons taken out of God's Word, and the best human testimonies, proving a necessity of reforming our churches in England. Framed and applied to Four Assertions wherein the aforesaid purpose is contained." 1604. 4to. By Henry Jacob.

Christian Offer:—Supposed also to refer to "A Christian and modest offer of a most indifferent conference or disputation, about the main and principal controversies betwixt the prelates and the late silenced and deprived ministers in England. Tendered by some of the said ministers to the archbishops and bishops, and all their adherents." Imprinted 1606. 4to. Also by Henry Jacob.

† The following words are in Bernard, and complete the 10th Counsel:—

"And bear what thou canst not avoid with a patient mind."

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sake, if pardon cannot be obtained, as is well advised. But where counsel is given to obey in anything, wherein a manifest known sin is not committed against God, this morsel must not be swallowed down till it be well chewed.

For a man may commit a sin against God, in doing a thing wherein there is no sin. The sin may be in the person doing, and not in the thing done: as when a man doth a good thing against his conscience or doubtingly, and without faith. 1 John iii. 20; Rom. xiv. 23.

And where Mr. B. further adviseth, rather to offend many private persons than one lawful magistrate, I doubt not he gives no worse counsel than he himself follows, who, except I be much deceived in him, had rather offend half the private persons in the diocese, than one archbishop, though he be an unlawful magistrate.

But of the case of offence hereafter. In the meanwhile, let us remember our care be not to offend the Lord, and if with the offence of a private person, though never so base, be joined the offence of the Lord, better offend all the both lawful and unlawful magistrates in the world, than such a little one. Matt. xviii. 6.

Lastly, where Mr. B. concludes this decade of counsels with that which is written, Rom. xiv. 17, 18, he misinterprets the apostle's words, if he put them down, as it seems he doth, for a reason of that which goes before. For the apostle in that place hath no reference at all to the authority of the magistrate, whose kingdom indeed doth stand in meat and drink, and the like bodily things, wherein he may command civilly, and is to be obeyed in the Lord: but the apostle's purpose is to admonish the strong in faith to take heed of abusing their Christian liberty in the unseasonable use of meats and drinks and the like, to the offence of the weak brethren, as though the kingdom of God stood in the peremptory use of those things, and that they were therein to show the liberty of the gospel.

Furthermore, howsoever the kingdom of God be not meat and drink, yet is the kingdom of God much advanced or hindered both in a man's self and in others, in the seasonable or unseasonable use of them. A man in using them, or rather abusing them, with offence to a weak

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brother, may destroy both him, and himself also, in breaking the law of charity. Rom. xiv. 15, 20.

SECT. II.—SECOND CLASS OF COUNSELS.*

It remains now we come to the second rank of counsels, as they are divided by the author, for what cause I know not, neither will I curiously inquire; but will take them as I find them.

1. "Omit no evident and certain commandment imposed of God. If there be nothing but probability of sinning in obeying the precepts of men, set not opinion before judgment."

Woeful counsel, God knoweth, and in deed such as directs a course to harden the heart of him that follows it in all impiety. For he, that will at the first do that by man's precept, which is like or which he thinks to be sin, will, in time, do that upon the like regard which he knows to be sin, and so fall into all presumption against God. Men are rather to be admonished, especially in the case of religion about which we deal, that if the Lord shall touch their tender hearts with fear and jealousy of the things they do, they rather suspend, in doubtful things, except they can, in some measure, overcome their doubting by faith, till in the use of all good means, the God of wisdom and Father of lights give to discern more plainly of things that differ; lest being head-strong and hard-mouthed against the check of conscience, which the Lord, like a bit, puts into their mouths, they provoke the Highest to withdraw his hand, and to lay the rein on their necks, and so they even run headlong upon those evils without fear, upon which, at the first, they have adventured with fearful and troubled consciences, which is ofttimes the just recompense of such errors from the Lord. Rom. i. 27, 28.

2. "Let ancient probability of truth be preferred before new conjectures of error against it."

As this rule shows by what tenure Mr. B. holds his religion, namely, by probabilities and likelihoods of truth;

* To show "How to avoid scrupulosity of conscience and contention in seeking for reformation."

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so if he mean that this way, wherein we by God's mercy walk, is any new way, or our rules, conjectures, I do hope by the good hand of God herein assisting me, to make it manifest, that this way is that old and good way, after which all men ought to ask and to walk therein, that so they may find rest unto their souls. Jer. vi. 16. And that we are not guided in it by conjectures, neither go by guesses, but by the infallible rule of Christ's Testament.

3. "Mark and hold a difference between these things; the equity of law and execution: between established truths generally, and personal errors of some: between soundness of doctrine, and erroneous application: between substance, and circumstance: the manner and the matter: between the very being of a thing, and the well-being thereof: between necessity and conveniency: between a commandment, and a commandment to thee: between lawfulness, and expediency: and between that which is given absolutely, or in some respect."

The sixth and seventh rules in the former rank, being the same in substance, might well have been bound up in the same bundle with this, had not the author laboured to supply that in the number of his counsels, which is wanting in their weight.

But to the point. There is a difference indeed to be held betwixt the laws of the Church of England, with the ordinances and doctrines by law established, and the personal executions, exercises, and applications of them; and the difference is betwixt evil and worse: and the worse of the twain by far I deem the laws and ordinances with sundry of the doctrines. For though the whole carriage of the courts, miscalled spiritual, be most corrupt and abominable, and though the pulpits be made by very many, especially in the greatest places, the stages of vanity, falsehood, and slander, so that as the prophet said, "What is the wickedness of Jacob? is not Samaria? And what are the high places of Judah? are they not Jerusalem?" Micah i. 5; so may we say, What is the sink of all bribery and extortion? Is not the consistory? What is the theatre of carnal vanity? Is not the pulpit? Yet in truth the laws are worse than those which execute them, and

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the ordinances by them established than those which minister them.

Let but the last canons, which are as well the laws and doctrine of the Church of England, as the canons of the council of Trent are the laws and doctrine of the Church of Rome, be severely and sincerely executed as becomes the laws of the kingdom of Christ, the church, all in the land having any fear of God, would find and complain that their bondage were increased, as was the bondage of the Israelites under the Egyptians. Exod. v.

But what, though there were neither statute or canon law enacted, for the confusion of the assemblies collected, and consisting of all the parish inhabitants, be they atheists, adulterers, blasphemers and how evil not? what, though no law ecclesiastical or civil, did confirm the transcendent power of the bishops and archbishops for the placing and displacing of ministers, for the thrusting out and receiving in, both of ministers and people, and so for innumerable other corruptions? Yet these things being universally practised in the land, the church were nothing at all the more pure, only it had the more liberty of reformation, which now by the laws and canons, as by iron bars, is shut out.

What statute or canon was there, that the Corinthians should suffer amongst them the incestuous person unreformed? And yet for so doing, this "little leaven leavens the whole lump." 1 Cor. v. 6.

What parliament or convocation-house amongst the Galatians had decreed the mingling of circumcision with the gospel? And yet for so doing they are charged by the apostle to be removed or turned away to another gospel. Gal. i. 6.

By what law was the mystery of iniquity confirmed? Or antichrist's coming into the world agreed upon in the apostles' time? And yet "the mystery of iniquity" then wrought, 2 Thess. ii. 7; "and many antichrists were then come into the world," 1 John ii. 18. And yet these mischiefs being found in the churches in the apostles' times, were as well imputed unto them, as if a thousand parliaments and convocations had ratified them.

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To proceed. It is also true which is further counselled, that a difference must be held betwixt substance and circumstance; betwixt the manner and the matter; betwixt the being and well-being of a thing; and so of the rest: but withal it must be observed that the Lord hath in his Word, as well appointed the manner how he will have things done, as the things themselves, and that even circumstances prescribed and determined by the Lord, are of that force, not only to deface the well-being, but to overturn the true being of God's worship.

The Lord commanded the Israelites by Moses to bring their sacrifices and oblations to the place which for that purpose he would choose, and there to offer them. Deut. xii. 5, 6.

And did not all offerings brought to any other place, without special dispensation, stink in his nostrils? And yet this was but a circumstance of place.

And wherein stands the breach of the fourth commandment but in a circumstance of time? Lastly, what was the transgression of Uzziah the king, for which God struck him with leprosy, but a personal aberration, a sin in the circumstance of person? for that he being no priest, would adventure to offer incense at the altar. 2 Chron. xxvi. 16—19.

Of the same nature was the sin of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, merely circumstantial: Dathan and Abiram being of a wrong tribe, and Korah of a wrong family, and yet for that their rebellion, the earth by God's judgment opened her mouth, and swallowed up both them and theirs. Numb. xvi. 1, 2, 32.

And for the well-being and right ordering of good things, the Lord as well requireth it, as the things themselves. He hath not left in the hands of the church a rude matter to frame after her own fashion, but with the matter he hath also appointed the manner and form wherein all things must be done.

When Moses, under the law, was to make the tabernacle, the Lord did not set him out the matter and stuff whereon to make it, and so left the manner and form to his pleasure and discretion, but appointed the one as the other; and if he had framed it, or anything about it after any other

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fashion than according to the pattern showed him in the mount, he had done abominably in the sight of the Lord. Exod. xxv. 3—40, &c., and xxvi. 2—6, &c.; Heb. viii. 5. When the ark of God was to be removed upon occasion, the priests were to cover it, that no hand might touch it, and so to carry it upon their shoulders to the place of rest. Numb. iv. 11, 15; Deut. xxxi. 9.

Now this order of the Lord was violated, in the bringing of it out of the house of Abinadab uncovered and upon a cart, after the fashion of the Egyptians, 1 Sam. vi. 7, 8. And the breach of this order the Lord punished very severely, making a breach upon Uzzah the priest for touching the ark, which was his personal sin, and for carrying it upon the cart, which sin was common to the rest of the priests with him; he was stricken dead by the hand of God in the same place. 2 Sam. vi.

Now both this and the former examples are left to warn us to take heed, that we presume not against the Lord in the least ceremony or circumstance, neither make any transgression small in our eyes, or the eyes of others, as the manner of too many is. But let us rather learn to fear before the Highest, whose eyes are pure, and can endure none iniquity; and let us labour to keep our hearts tender against all sin, even against that which seemeth the least; knowing that if the Lord should let Satan loose upon us, to press our consciences, and should withdraw his comforts from us in our temptations, the least sin would prove a burden intolerable.

4 "Use the present good which thou mayest enjoy to the utmost, and an experienced good before thou dost trouble thyself to seek for a supposed better good untried, which thou enjoyest not."*

We must so enjoy experienced good things, as we stock not ourselves in respect of other things, as yet untried. We may not stint or circumscribe either our knowledge, or faith, or obedience, within straiter bounds than the whole revealed will of God, in the knowledge and obedience whereof we must daily increase and edify our-

* The rule in Bernard has also the following: "Dislike not things present, as men do discontentedly; praise not things past, foolishly; and desire not a change, hoping for a better, vainly."

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selves; much less must we suffer ourselves to be stripped of any liberty which Christ our Lord hath purchased for us, and given us to use for our good. Gal. v. 1.

And here, as I take it, comes in the case of many hundreds in the church of England, who what good they may enjoy, that is safely enjoy or without any great bodily danger, that they use very fully. Where the ways of Christ lie open for them, by the authority of men, and where they may walk safely with good leave, there they walk very uprightly, and that a round pace; but when the commandments of Christ are as it were hedged up with thorns, by men's prohibitions, there they foully "step aside, and pitch their tents by the flocks of his fellows." Cant. i. 7.

There are many in the land very zealous and severe in all the duties of the second table, and in the private and personal duties of the first table, and in such public duties also as the times will bear, and in those respects may say as Jehu did to Jehonadab, "See the zeal which I have for the house of the Lord," 2 Kings x. 16; but consider the same persons in their communion, liturgy, ministry and government, and there seemeth a most monstrous composition. These things, in the same men, do agree as ill as the ark of God and Dagon, in the same house. We ought in no case to share our service betwixt Christ and antichrist, nor to stock ourselves in any the least parts of the revealed will of God, but must grow and increase in the whole body of obedience, and all the parts thereof; otherwise, as in the natural body, if one part grow and not another, the effect will be monstrous. Ezek. xviii. 11, 12; James ii. 10; Deut. viii. 1.

The 5th, 6th, and 7th* precepts I pretermit: the 8th followeth.

* 5. "Endeavour for things which are of necessity, wish also the well-being of the same for conveniency; but for this contend not forcibly against public peace: lest in seeking for the *bene*, thou dost utterly lose the benefit of the necessary *esse*.

6. "Do not trouble thyself either to take part with, or to be against that thing, the holding or denying whereof worketh nothing for or against religion, salvation, or damnation.

7. "In a common cause make one, but after thy own judgment, convinced of truth, and within the compass of thy calling; not for company, to make up a number, or for that thou wilt be doing because others are so."

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8. "Never presume to reform others, before thou hast well ordered thyself," &c.*

True zeal, it is certain, ever begins at home, and gives more liberty unto other men than it dares assume unto itself. And there is nothing more true or necessary to be considered, than that every man ought to order himself and his own steps first. That is good and the best, but not all. For if by God's commandment we ought to "bring back our enemy's ox or ass that strayeth," Exod. xxiii. 4, how much more to bring into order our brother's soul and body wandering in by-paths?

And here Mr. Bernard brings to mind a practice usual with many of the preachers in their sermons. They will advance prayer, viz., their service book, that they may extenuate preaching; commend peace, that they may smother truth; plead much for Cæsar's due to be given him, that they may detain from God his due; and everywhere send men back into themselves, that they may keep them from looking upon others, and so make them careless of such duties towards their brethren, as God's Word binds them unto. Levit. xix. 17. 1 Thess. v. 14. As though the commandments of God were opposite one to another, and could not stand together, whereas they are all most holy and good, and all helpful one to another, and all to be practised in their places; whether they concern ourselves or our brethren. They of the one sort ought to be done, and they of the other not to be left undone.

The 9th, 10th, and 11th rules I acknowledge without exception.†

* 8. "See at home, then look abroad; redress that which is faulty and in thy power to amend, before thou dost meddle with that which is beyond thy reach. Be not fair in public, and foul in private, hate hypocrisy and avoid vain-glory."

† 9. "Receive no opinion in religion, but what the Word evidently doth warrant; beware of apprehensions out of thine own wit, but let the Word first give thee sight, and so entertain it as thou art enlightened. As thou mayest not of policy for fear of trouble, by thy wit get thee distinctions, to lose sincerity where the Word is plain: so mayest thou not of scrupulosity, imagine sin to trouble thy conscience and to vex thee with fear of transgression and where there is no law: the one doth breed atheism, the other is the mother of superstition.

10. "Let thy own knowledge ground thy opinions in thee, and not in the judgment of others. See into the glass of the Word by thy

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12. "Whomsoever thou dost see to do amiss, judge it not to be of wilfulness, but either of ignorance, and so offer to inform them; or of infirmity, and so pity them, and pray for them. Be charitable," &c.*

This rule as it is not universally true, for we may oft-times discern in men's both words and actions, wilful and wayward obstinacy, and so may judge of them, 1 Tim. vi. 5; Tit. iii. 10, 11: so is it ill practised by him that gives it. For amongst other sins wherewith he loadeth the separatists in his book, "wilful obstinacy in their schism," is one.

Here full charitably he advertiseth to judge no man wilful in his sin, and yet there he himself so judgeth us: either excluding us from the common liberties of mankind, as worms and no men; or himself following the steps of his forefathers, in laying heavy burdens upon other men's shoulders, which himself will not touch with the least finger. Matt. xxiii. 4.

Against the 13th direction,† I have not to oppose, and therefore pass to the 14th and last, touching things indifferent; by which this author makes way into many an impertinent and indigested consideration. The rule followeth:—

14. "In things indifferent make no question for conscience sake, so it be that neither holiness, merit nor ne-

own sight, without other men's spectacles, and hold what thou judgest truth, only in love of the truth. Beware of by-respects; so hold the truth as never to be removed; but that which is erroneous in thee, be willing both to see and to be reclaimed.

11. "Witness the truth for the truth's sake: inform others lovingly; desire that they may see the truth, but never urge them beyond their judgment, neither take it grievously, if thy words do not prevail, but wait with patience. Beware of rash judgment, neither condemn nor contemn others that are not as thyself. Think not to make thy gifts another's guide, nor thy measure of grace their rule, for to every man is allotted his portion."

* 12. "So shall not his sin hurt thee, and much shall thy charity advantage thyself in the end: and add this withal, Be slow to anger, let never another man's distempered passion bring thee to disorderliness in affection."

† 13. "Love not to be in controversies, it argueth pride and a spirit of contention: but if thou beest drawn into them and called thereunto, undertake the right and choose the truth."

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cessity be put therein: nor used for any part of God's worship, but for decency, order and edification."

For answer of this, sundry things are to be considered.

And first, that which the apostle speaks, 1 Cor. x. 25, 27, of the common conversation of Christians in the world, and of their liberty that way, Mr. B. misapplieth to the case of religion, and matters of God's worship, as though men might use as great liberty in the matters of religion or about the same, as in their worldly affairs.

Secondly, where the apostle, ver. 25, 27, directs the faithful to make no conscience of eating, he further addeth, ver. 28, 29, that for the offence of a weak brother scandalizing at the eating of Idolothites,* they ought to make conscience and to forbear. This latter part which is the very drift of the scripture, Mr. B. concealeth, and so maimeth the sense, and frustrateth the reader; and whether, to this end he leaves not the words unquoted, his own heart knows best.

3. Howsoever you labour to cover your popish ceremonies, for these you mean though you name them not, under the title of things indifferent, of toys, trifles and the like, champing them small, that they may the easier be swallowed, denying that either holiness or necessity is put in them, or that they are made parts of God's worship, yet hath the contrary been sufficiently manifested by your own men, to whose large treatises to this purpose, I refer the reader. Notwithstanding since Mr. B. casts this consideration, as a stone in the way to other matters of importance, I may not altogether overstride it, but will turn it over as I go, that the reader as he passeth by, may see what worms and other vermin lie under it.

First, then, to let pass the holiness which thousands in the land put in the cross, surplice, kneeling at the communion, without which they think no service or sacrament so acceptable to God, for which cause alone they ought not only to be forborne, but to be abolished much rather than the brazen serpent, 2 Kings xviii., it is evident that the same special uses and ends are ascribed unto them, and to the principal parts of God's worship: and so agreeing in their ends they agree in their natures.

* "Things offered in sacrifice to idols."

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One main end and use of the word of God, is to teach and signify unto us the good will of God, and our duty mutually towards him and towards our brethren, and to stir up our minds to the remembrance and performance of the same. 2 Tim. iii. 16. And what less is attributed to the ceremonies, when "they are neither dark nor dumb, but apt to stir up the dull mind of man to the remembrance of his duty to God."*

The proper ends and uses of baptism are to initiate the parties baptized into the Church of Christ, and to consecrate them to his service, and so to serve for badges of Christianity, by which it is distinguished from all other professions, Matt. xxviii. 19; 1 Cor. xii. 13. And for what meaner use serves the sign of the cross in baptism, by or with which, the child is received into the congregation of Christ's flock, and by it as by an honourable badge of Christian profession dedicated to the service of Christ?†

And so those ceremonies supposed indifferent, agreeing with the main parts of God's worship in their ends, must agree also in their natures with them, since *fines rerum sunt e formis*, and so consequently must have holiness in them, or else your worship, Mr. B., is very unholy.

And what necessity is put in them, all men see when the purest preaching in the land without them is thought not only unnecessary, but even intolerable. And if necessity be laid upon the ministers to preach the gospel, 1 Cor. ix. 16, then, that to which the preaching of the gospel must give place, is more necessary, and so made.

Moreover, to make a thing indifferent, and yet to serve for decency, order and edification, includes a contradiction. For it is not an indifferent thing to minister the ordinances of Christ decently, orderly and to edification; but a matter of simple necessity. 1 Cor. xiv. 26, 40.

Yea I add, if the ceremonies make the worship of God the more comely, orderly, and edificative, they ought continually and diligently to be used, yea though they were forbidden by the highest power upon earth: as on the contrary, if they advantage not the worship of God for those purposes, they are vain and frivolous, and to be forborne in or about the worship of God, which abhors all such vanity.

* Treatise of Ceremonies. † Service Book, Canon xxx.

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Lastly, as we live in a very indifferent age for religion, wherein the most are indifferent of what religion they are; yea whether they be of any or none; so no marvel though men stand stiffly for indifferency of things. And when they have amongst them such devices, as they neither can approve for good, nor will condemn as evil, they baptize them into the name of indifferent things. But the truth is, there is nothing simply indifferent in the use: but be it never so base or mean a ceremony, circumstance or appurtenance to any solemn action, it is either good or evil according to the furtherance or hinderance which it affordeth to the main. If it give furtherance to a natural action, it is naturally good; if to a civil action, civilly good; if to a religious action, religiously good; and so to be reputed: otherwise it is vain at the least: and vanity as it is everywhere evil, so is it in matters of religion the taking of God's name in vain.

SECT. III.—ON SCRUPULOSITY OF CONSCIENCE.

The next thing which Mr. B. undertakes, is to set down how scrupulosity of conscience ariseth in men: for which disease (if it arise) surely he showeth himself a physician of no value for the healing of it: but either smothereth the same under the authority of the magistrate, or dispenseth with it upon good meanings, or forceth it on without assurance, or entangleth it with new doubts.

In the first inquiry which he wills men to make into themselves, touching scrupulosity of conscience, amongst other things he speaks thus:—

"If the ground, viz. of doubting, be not a judgment enlightened, and convinced, it is not trouble of conscience, but a dislike working discontentment upon some" other "grounds," " which thou mayest easily remove, by settling thy judgment upon the word and sound reason."

And this, in the margin, he wills the reader to note well, as indeed he may note it and brand it, too, for ill and unadvised counsel.

For howsoever no man's conscience ought to scandalize or be troubled at the use of lawful things, for the larger conscience the better in that which is lawful, and that

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such doubts in the heart do arise from weakness of faith; and weakness of faith from want of knowledge: yet since we all know but in part, 1 Cor. xiii. 12, and that our faith is according to our knowledge, and our conscience according to our faith, when a doubt or scruple ariseth in our hearts touching the lawfulness of things, yea, though it be of very ignorance, we must not pass it over lightly without trouble, lest it prove as a thorn in the heel and rankle inwardly. Neither are such scruples always so easily removed, as Mr. B. makes account. Weak and tender consciences do ofttimes stick at a very straw, and there must they stand, till the Lord give strength to step over.

The thing intended and promised by Mr. B. in the next place, is satisfaction to the perplexed conscience, and direction in that case: which he is so far from performing by sound and resolved counsel, as were meet, as instead thereof, he propounds sundry doubts and queries of his own, which he leaves unsatisfied, to the further entangling of his perplexed patient: abusing also his reader too much in performing questions, where he promiseth answers.

Well, howsoever it be an easier thing to tie knots than to loose them, and that a simple man may cast a stone into a ditch, which a wise man cannot get out again: yet are not those questions which Mr. B. propounds and so leaves unanswered, so dark and doubtful, that a man needs take so long a journey as the Queen of Sheba did, for resolution.

The first query of weight being the fourth in order, I will set down word for word, though it be large, because it is of special consideration. The question then is:—

"Why a man should be more scrupulous to seek to have warrant plainly for everything he doth in ecclesiastical causes, even about things indifferent, more than about matters politic in civil affairs. Men in these things know not the ground nor end of many things, which they do yield unto upon a general command to obey authority, and knowing them not to be directly against God's will: and yet every particular obedience in civil matters must be 1. of conscience, 2. as serving the Lord (so must every servant his master), which cannot be without knowledge and persuasion that we do well even in that particular

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which we obey in. Which men usually for conscience' sake inquire not into, but do rest themselves with a general commandment of obeying lawful authority, so it be not against a plain commandment of God. What therefore doth let but that a man may so satisfy himself in matters ecclesiastical?"

Though as plain a warrant must be had from God's Word, for the things we do in matters politic, as in causes ecclesiastical; and that, obedience in the one as well as in the other, must be of conscience: yet notwithstanding, the same Word of God warranteth unto us clean and another and different course of obedience in things civil, and in things ecclesiastical.

And the gross ignorance or ungodly concealment of this difference, is the cause of great confusion. It must therefore be considered that this difference stands in two points: 1. The nature of the things and their proper ends. 2. The power immediate by which they are imposed; from which two ariseth necessarily a third difference to be made in the conscience of obedience unto them.

First then, it cannot be denied, but matters civil and politic do come under the general administration and government of the world, and do respect the outward man for his present life. On the other side, matters ecclesiastical come under the special administration of the church, and serve for the edification and building up of the inward man to life eternal.

Secondly, magistrates and men in authority, do enact and impose their civil decrees and ordinances upon their subjects, by a kingly and lordly power, as being kings and lords civilly over the outward man, and his outward estate, Matt. xx. 25; and may by their kingly and lordly power command in their own names, and that upon occasion to the civil hurt and hinderance of many of their people, and are therein to be obeyed notwithstanding. Rom. xiii. 1—3, &c.; Matt. xxii. 21.

But in causes ecclesiastical not so. There is no king of the church but Christ, who is the King of saints and Saviour of Zion, Rev. xv. 3; Isa. lxii. 11; no lord but Jesus, who is the only Lord and Lawgiver of his church. Eph. iv. 5; James iv. 12. And all his laws and statutes tend to the

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furtherance and advancement of every one of his subjects in their spiritual estate, and neither king nor Cæsar may or ought to impose any law to the least prejudice of the same, neither are they therein (if they should) to be obeyed. Our civil liberty we may lose without sin, and without sin undergo bodily damages, Matt. xxii. 21, but we are bidden, "Stand for the liberty wherewith Christ has freed us," Gal. v. 1, and that is, the whole liberty of the church; and to "let no man judge us," Col. ii. 16, that is, ecclesiastically, no, not in meats and drinks, though civilly men may command and judge us in them. And upon these grounds truly laid by the Word of God, an answer may be framed on this manner.

In civil affairs we may and ought to obey for the authority of the commander, yea though we know not any good, but on the contrary much harm to our bodily estate, coming unto us by the same: but in matters ecclesiastical which are subordinate to the soul's good, we must obey only for the ends of the things commanded, and as they tend to the edification of ourselves and others. 1 Cor. xiv. 26.

To conclude this point, since the apostles expressly command that all things in the church be done to the edification of the same, I would demand of Mr. B. with what faith or good conscience he or any other man, can do or enterprise any one thing in the church, which he or they are not persuaded by the Word of God, which is the rule of faith, tends to edification?

These things being thus, there is no cause why Mr. B. should account it curiosity to search particularly into everything for satisfaction, the differences formerly laid down being observed; neither doth this holy care of God's servants, as he further addeth, work upon men's wits to bring distinctions, but, on the contrary, men of corrupt minds and unfaithful lest they should be reformed by the Word of God, do get distinctions, like excuses after their own hearts. Much less is it either truly or christianly affirmed which followeth, that the more men seek in doubts for resolution, the further they are from it. For howsoever it may be thus with Mr. B. and many others, which seek the truth as cowards do their enemies, with a fear to find it, lest it trouble their carnal peace; yet have other men better issue

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of their labours, and by seeking have found that hidden treasure for the purchase whereof they are content to sell all they have, and to buy it. Matt. vii. 7, and xiii. 44. In the next place come in six rules of directions how to settle the conscience to prevent scrupulosity, and perplexity.

"1. Keep all main truths in the Word which are most plainly set down, and are by the law of nature engraven in every man."

First, you are much mistaken, Master Bernard, if you imagine that all main truths in the Word are engraven, in every man, by the law of nature. For the gospel is the more principal part of the Word, which, notwithstanding, is wholly supernatural and above the created knowledge of man or angel. Matt. xi. 27; Eph. iii. 10.

Secondly, if in commending main truths and such as are plainly set down, you do insinuate that there are any truths so mean which we may either neglect to search, or having found them, to obey, therein you should deceive by promising liberty, and make yourself wiser than God, and cross his ordinance and appointment. 2 Tim. iii. 16; Deut. iv. 1, 2.

And for things left more dark in the Scriptures, they must be unto us matter of humiliation in our natural blindness, and of more earnest meditation and prayer with all good conscience.

"2. Believe every collection, truly and necessarily, gathered by an immediate consequence from the text."

This is good but not sufficient. For collections truly made (though by mediate consequences one after another) are to be received, though the fewer the better, and the less subject to danger. And we must not curtail the discourse of reason, soberly used and sanctified by the Word, so short as Mr. B. would have us. When the Lord Jesus was to deal with the Sadducees, about the resurrection, he took his proof from that which is written, Exod. iii. 6: "I am the God of Abraham," &c., which words do no way conclude the resurrection of the body (which was the question) by any immediate consequence, and yet the collection was good and necessary. Matt. xxii. 23—32.

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The third and fourth directions I omit as questionless,* and come to the fifth in order.

"5. Entertain true antiquity, and follow the general practice of the church of God in all ages, where they have not erred from the evident truth of God."

It cannot be denied but that is best, which is most ancient, and that truth and righteousness were in the world before sin and error; but neither the one nor the other did continue long, either amongst men or angels. And he that but considers what monstrous errors and corruptions sprang up in the church of the New Testament, whilst the apostles lived which planted them, will not think it strange though almost all were overgrown with such briars and thorns, in a few ages following.

And what, not only unsoundness in doctrine, but uncertainty in story, is to be found in the most ancient writers, no man, though but even meanly exercised in them, can be ignorant. And yet if we would take up these weapons, it were easy to make good our part against the Church of England in the main differences. But we have the Word of God, which is to us a sure testimony: and if he be only to be heard of whom God from heaven hath testified, Matt. iii. 17, and xxiii. 10; Acts iii. 22; as the only prophet and doctor of his church, we are not then so much to regard what any man hath practised before us, as what Christ hath commanded which is before all. And we must, in the first, labour to have our hearts seasoned with the Word of God and according to that taste must all men's, both persuasions and practices, be favoured by us: taking heed of those preposterous courses commonly held; some, at the first, corrupting their hearts with the thorny subtilties of the schoolmen, and more witty than sound sayings of the fathers, and others prejudicing and forestalling themselves by the present and sensible state of things before their eyes, or by the general and partial practice of times past; and so coming, in the last place, to the Word of God, hauling

* "3. Follow evident examples fit for thee, either as a Christian, or as thy special calling requireth.

"4. Avoid that which is plainly forbidden, or followeth necessarily by an immediate consequence."

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that in, to back and support their exalted forestalled imaginations.

" 6. If thou suffer, let it be for known truth, and against known wickedness, for which thou hast examples in the Word, or examples of holy martyrs in story, suffering for the same or the like. But beware of far-fetched consequences," &c.*

We are to forbear evils not only known but suspected and doubted of. Rom. xiv. 22, 23. And he, that knows what a heart meaneth truly softened and made tender with the blood of Christ, had rather suffer all extremities than approve that as good, either by word, writing, or practice, which he but doubteth to be evil, and to displease God, except by faith he can overcome that doubt in some measure.

And for us, though we had no example either in the Word of God, or other story of any martyrs suffering in the same or the like particulars with us, yet since the things we suffer for, are parts of the general truth of the gospel, which others before us have witnessed, we must expose and give our bodies to the smiters, and our cheeks unto the nippers, and must not hide our faces from reproaches and spitting rather than we deny the least part of it. Isa. l. 6. How much more, then, considering how many witnesses the Lord hath raised up, which, having finished their testimony against the apostacy and usurpation of the man of sin, some in one degree and some in another, have been killed by the beast, some of old and others of late times. Rev. xi. 3—7.

Lastly, where mention is made of things only "seeming unto men just and holy:" it must be considered, that it is all one to the conscience of the doer, whether the thing done be so in truth, or but in appearance. And he, that either doth that which seemeth unto him unjust and unholy, or passeth by that which seemeth just and holy, sinneth against his own heart, "and if his own heart condemn him, God, who is greater than his heart, will much more condemn him." 1 John iii. 20.

"7. If yet thou doest judge a thing commanded a sin, and not to be obeyed; for thy help herein, inquire whether

* "Or of suffering for new devices and for things, formerly unto all ages unknown, seem they never so holy and just to men."

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that which is wrongfully or sinfully commanded, may not yet, nevertheless, be without sin obeyed, as Joab obeyed David in numbering the people."

This is as much as if, in plain terms, you should counsel a man, to consider whether he may not sin without sin: for what else is it, to obey that commandment, which a man judgeth not to be obeyed? A cold comforter are you to a perplexed conscience and an ill counsellor, thus to advise men to be bold against the Lord, and to try whether they can blind their consciences, and harden their hearts, that they may sin without feeling, or fear.

The example of Joab in obeying David, is impertinent. The case was civil, and in civil affairs many things may lawfully be undergone, which are unlawfully imposed. For example: if the king, merely for his pleasure, should enjoin Mr. B. upon some great penalty to come into the field soldierlike, to draw a sword, shoot, march, or the like, the magistrate might do evil in thus commanding, and yet not Mr. B. in obeying: but thus to do in the church or pulpit in the time of God's worship, were as sinful obedience as were the commandment sinful. All actions ecclesiastical, in or about God's worship, are subordinate to the edification of the church and to good order; if they tend thereto they are lawful in the commander, if not, they are unlawful in him that obeyeth.

Besides, David's commandment for numbering the people, was no way unlawful, in itself but upon occasion, both lawful and necessary. Numb. i. 2 and xxvi. 4. It was only the curiosity or pride or infidelity of David's heart made the sin, which might hurt himself, but not Joab. But had Joab judged the thing commanded sin, and not to have been obeyed, he had sinned in obeying, as well as David in commanding.

That which Mr. B. calls next into question, is, whether the recusant ministers may not for the free preaching of the gospel, yield so far to the evil disposition of the prelates as to subscribe, and conform unto their ceremonies, though they cannot approve of them, nor judge them lawful. For this is the thing Mr. B. aims at, though he carry the matter something covertly, because he would offend neither party. And, to persuade unto this, he brings

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in Paul, checking himself for reviling the high priest, and observing the legal ceremonies after abolishment, to procure free liberty to preach the gospel; and after, Moses granting a bill of divorcement contrary to the law of marriage, for the very hardness of the people's hearts.

To this I answer sundry things, as, first to preach the gospel, upon condition of obedience, in that, wherein a man either judgeth or suspecteth himself to sin, is nothing less than to preach the gospel freely: though this be, in truth, that free preaching of the gospel in the Church of England whereof we hear so many loud boasts. And to persuade a man unto this, is, to persuade him to do evil that good may come thereof, as though the Lord stood in need of man's sin, for the publishing of his truth, or saving of his elect.

The preaching of the gospel is a most excellent thing, and the fruits of it far better than those of Eden, and oh! how happy were we, if with exchange of half the days of our lives we might freely publish it to our own nation, for the converting of sinners; yet must no man be so far possessed with the excellency of the object, as were our first parents with the goodness, beauty, and supposed benefit of the forbidden fruit, as to press unto it by unlawful ways: and for a man to go about to persuade to the practice of a thing, by the casual fruits and effects of it, and not, in the meanwhile, to clear the way of fear and scruple of sin, in the means of attaining the proposed good, is to go about to deceive him whom he persuadeth, and by a bait, as it were, to till* his conscience, as a bird into a snare, into most fearful entanglements.

And for Paul, as it is a very ungodly suspicion cast upon him, that he should do anything which he doubted to be sin, or which he did not most assuredly know was pleasing unto God, so is it very untruly affirmed, that he did what he did, either, as yielding to the evil disposition of men, or to procure free liberty to preach the gospel. He did all things most freely and without any respect to human authority, fulfilling the royal law of love in tendering† the weakness of the brethren, newly converted from Judaism, observing with them the legal rites, and those

* To ensnare. † Yielding to, pitying.

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also made a part of God's worship by them, and that without all probability of sinning, whereof you impeach him.

Now for Moses, he did not grant, that is, approve of the bill of divorcement, but only permitted it for the avoiding of a greater evil, which civil magistrates may do in some cases, which, notwithstanding, no man used without sin. And what doth this better your popish ceremonies?

The last thing in question, is the case of offence, touching which you make many doubts, where the Holy Ghost makes none; forgetting your own good admonition, that men should "take heed of getting distinctions, and other evasion through policy or fear of trouble to lose sincerity, where the Word is plain."

There is not a case in the whole Bible more clear, than that the things called indifferent, may and ought to be forborne, for the weak conscience of a brother. Rom. xiv. 15, 20, 21; 1 Cor. ix. 19—22: and x. 23, 24, 28, 29. And yet this clear truth you labour to darken, by the mist of man's authority, pretence of good effects, surmises of partiality, humour, and folly in the parties offended, raised out of your own heart. But let us hear your advice.

"Quære, whether it be an offence justly given by thee, or taken without just reason of others: thou, not offending and they displeased, the fault is their own and thou not chargeable therewith."

But you must understand, Mr. B. that in the unseasonable use of things in themselves indifferent, there is an offence both given and taken, and so a double sin committed: he that gives the offence, sins, through want of charity; and he that takes it, through want or weakness of faith. And so where actions simply good, do only hurt him that takes offence; and actions simply evil, him that gives it; the use of things indifferent against expediency, hurts and harms and destroys both. Rom. xiv. 15.

Now the parts of your second inquiry, viz. "whether men be offended in respect of what themselves know, or but led by affection, disliking of other men's dislike," are insufficient. For men do ofttimes take offence at the things done, and yet neither in respect of their own

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knowledge nor of other men's dislike, but merely through want of knowledge and upon ignorance of their Christian liberty. And such were the weak brethren spoken of, Rom. xiv., 1 Cor. viii. and ix., which how they were to be tendered in their weakness, let the places judge.

And for persons, partially affectionate, or foolishly froward, which is the main point in the third quære, they are no way to be regarded as weak, but, on the contrary, to be reproved as wayward and contentious, that folly and sin may not rest upon them. Only let men take heed they judge not uncharitably of their brethren, because they would practise uncharitably towards them, as Nabal reviled David and his men as renegades, because he would deal churlishly with them, and would show them no mercy. 1 Sam. xxv. 10.

In the fourth place it is demanded,

"What authority may do, in things external for outward rule, in the circumstances of things?"

How colourably you carry all the abominations in your church under the shadow of circumstances, and of how great moment even circumstances are, in the case of religion, I have formerly spoken: let me only add thus much.

If a subject should usurp the crown, and exercise regal authority, the difference were but in the circumstance of person, which notwithstanding made the action high treason. Or if a priest coming to say his evening song should fall asleep on his desk, it were but a matter of circumstance in respect of time and place, it might lawfully be done in another place, and at another time, yet there and then it were a great profaning of the service-book. What sway authority hath in the Church of England, appeareth in the laws of the land, which make the government of the church alterable at the magistrates' pleasure: and so the clergy in their submission to King Henry VIII. do derive, as they pretend, their ecclesiastical jurisdiction from him, and so exercise it. Indeed, many of the late bishops and their proctors, seeing how monstrous the ministration is of Divine things, by a human authority and calling; and growing bold upon the present disposition of the magistrate, have disclaimed that former title, and do professedly hold their ecclesiastical power and

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jurisdiction *de jure divino*, and so, consequently, by God's Word unalterable. Of whom I would demand this one question:

What if the king should discharge and expel the present ecclesiastical government, and plant instead of it the presbytery or eldership, would they submit unto the government of the elders, yea or no? if yea, then were they traitors to the Lord Jesus submitting to a government, overthrowing his government, as doth the Presbyterian government, that which is Episcopal; if no, then how could they free themselves from such imputations of disloyalty to princes, and disturbance of states, as wherewith they load us and others opposing them? But to the question itself.

As the "kingdom of Christ is not of this world," John xviii. 36, but spiritual, and he a spiritual King; so must the government of this spiritual kingdom, under this spiritual King, needs be spiritual, and all the laws of it. And as Christ Jesus hath by the merits of his priesthood redeemed as well the body as the soul, 1 Cor. vi. 20; so is he also by the sceptre of his kingdom to rule and reign over both, unto which Christian magistrates as well as meaner persons, ought to submit themselves, and the more Christian they are, the more meekly to take the yoke of Christ upon them, and the greater authority they have, the more effectually to advance his sceptre over themselves and their people by all good means. Neither can there be any reason given, why the merits of saints, may not as well be mingled with the merits of Christ for the saving of his church, as the laws of men with his laws, for the ruling and guiding of it. He is as absolute and as entire a King as he is a Priest, and his people must be as careful to preserve the dignity of the one, as to enjoy the benefit of the other.

The next quære is, "Whether authority commanding doth not take away the offence which might otherwise be given in a voluntary act."

This question is answered affirmatively, by the bishops and their adherents, and so with one voice they affirm in their books, pulpits, and other public determinations: but herein as palpably flattering the magistrate, as ever canonist

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did the pope. What more was ever given to the pope, than that he might dispense with the moral law? And what less is given to the king when by his authority I use things indifferent with offence to my weak brother? Is not love "the fulfilling of the law?" Rom. xiii. 8, and is it not against the law of love to use things indifferent with offence? Rom. xiv. 13, which must the more carefully be avoided, considering the effects it draws with it, which are not only the grief, which were too much, but even the destruction of him for whom Christ died, Rom. xiv. 15, 20; 1 Cor. viii. 11.

Only he which can strengthen the weak faith which is the cause of the offence, can take away the offence, and establish him that is weak. Rom. xiv. 4. Men may and must use means for that purpose, and not nourish the weak in their weakness, but bear them they must in love, and much love will have much patience.

Lastly, for I pass over the fifth quære as comprehended in those which go before, where you advise men to study, and, again, to study to be quiet, and to follow those things which concern peace, Rom. xiv. 19; Heb. xii. 14: it is needful counsel, and again needful, considering what unquiet spirits are to be found in all places. Only let men in their counsels, which you leave out, join with peace, edification, and holiness as the Scriptures teach, and so, separating the precious from the vile, they shall be to us as God's mouth, Jer. xv. 19; Prov. xii. 20; Matt. v. 9: and let their peace be in the word of righteousness, and the joy of the counsellors of peace shall be upon them, and the blessing of peace-makers upon their heads.

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CHAPTER II.

MR. BERNARD'S DISSUASIONS AGAINST SEPARATION CONSIDERED.

THE next thing that comes into consideration, is, certain probabilities and likelihoods, as the author calls them, consisting for the most part of personal imputations, and disgraceful calumniations, whereby he labours to withdraw the hearts of the simple from the truth of God, unto disobedience, as Absalom did the people into rebellion against the king by slandering his government. 2 Sam. xv.

But if Mr. B. followed his sound judgment in this book, as he professeth in the Preface, and so laboured to lead others, he would neither go himself, nor send them by unstable guesses and likelihoods, as he doth.

The truth of God goes not by peradventures, neither needs it any such paper-shot as likelihoods are to assault the adversary withal. The Word of God, which is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, and to instruct in righteousness, 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17, is sufficient to furnish the man of God with weapons spiritual, and those, "mighty through God to cast down strongholds, and whatsoever high thing is exalted," against the knowledge of God, 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. And if Mr. B. speak according to the law and prophets, his words are solid arguments; if not, there is neither light in him, nor truth in them: and so where truth is wanting, must some like truths or images of truth be laid in the place; like the image in David's bed to deceive them that sought after him, when he himself was wanting. 1 Sam. xix. 13.

The first probability that our way is not good, is,

"The novelty thereof differing from all the best reformed Churches in Christendom."

It is no novelty to hear men plead custom, when they want truth. So the heathen philosophers reproached Paul as a bringer of new doctrine, Acts xvii. 19: so do the papists discountenance the doctrine and profession of the Church of England, yea, even at this day, very many of the people in the land, use to call popery the old law, and the profession there made, the new law.

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But we for our parts, as we do believe by the Word of God, that the things we teach are not new, but old truths renewed; so are we no less fully persuaded, that the church constitution in which we are set, is cast in the apostolical and primitive mould, and not one day nor hour younger, in the nature and form of it, than the first church of the New Testament. And whether a people all of them separated and sanctified, so far as men by their fruits can or ought to judge, or a mingled generation of the seed of the woman and seed of the serpent, be more ancient; the government of sundry elders or bishops with joint authority over one church, or of one national, provincial, or diocesan bishop over many hundred or thousand churches; the spiritual prayers conceived in the heart of the ministers according to the present occasions or necessities of the church, or the English service book; the simple administration of the sacraments, according to the words of institution, or pompous and carnal complements of cap, cope, surplice, cross, godfathers, kneeling and the like mingled withal; I do even refer it to the report of Mr. B.'s own conscience, be it never so partial.

Now for the differences betwixt the best reformed churches, as Mr. B. calls them, granting thereby his own to be the worst, and us, they are extant in print, being few in number, and those none of the greatest weight. But what a volume would these differences make betwixt those reformed churches, and the unreformed churches of England, if they were exactly set down! And yet for the corruptions reproved by us in the reformed church where we live, I do understand by them of good knowledge, and sincerity, that the most or greatest of them are rather in the execution than in the constitution of the church.

Our differences from the reformed churches Mr. B. aggravates by two reasons. 1. The first is our separation from them. 2. The second, certain terms of disgrace uttered by Mr. Barrowe and Mr. Greenwood against the eldership: which Mr. Bernard will have us disclaim.

For the first, it is not truly affirmed that we separate from them. What our judgment is of them, our confessions of faith and other writings do testify; and for our practice, as we cannot possibly join unto them, would we

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never so fain, being utterly ignorant of their language; so neither do we separate from them, save in such particulars as we esteem evil; which we also shall endeavour to manifest unto them so to be as occasion and means shall be offered.

And secondly, for the taxations laid by Mr. Barrowe and Mr. Greenwood upon the eldership, or other practice in the reformed churches, wherein they were any way excessive, we both have disclaimed, and always are and shall be ready to disclaim the same. Only I entreat the godly reader to consider, that those things were not spoken by them otherwise, than in respect of those corruptions in the eldership and elsewhere, which they deemed antichristian and evil. Of which respective phrase of speech more hereafter.

Lastly, if it be likely that our way is not good, for the difference it hath from the reformed churches, and that the greatness of the difference appears by the hard terms given, by some of us, against the government there used, then surely it is much more likely, that the way of the unreformed Church of England is not good, which differeth far more from the reformed churches, which difference appears, not only in most reproachful terms used by the prelates and their adherents against the seekers of reformation comparing them to all vile heretics, and seditious persons, but in cruel persecutions raised against them, and greater than against papists or atheists.*

The second mark by which Mr. B. guesseth our way not good is, "for that it agreeth so much with the ancient schismatics condemned in former ages by holy and learned men;" such were the Luciferians, Donatists, Novatians, and Audæans.†

Can our way both be a novelty and new device, and yet agree so well with the ancient schismatics condemned in

* Against Scoticizing and Genevating Ministers. O. O. his Picture of a Puritan.

† *Luciferians.*—The disciples of Lucifer, Bishop of Cagliari in Sardinia, who was banished in the fourth century by the Emperor Constantius, for having defended the Nicene doctrine concerning the three Persons in the Godhead.

Donatists.—Ecclesiastical historians differ as to the founder of this sect, which existed in the fourth century; some considering Donatus,

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former ages? Contraries cannot be both true, but may both be false as these are.

The parties to whom Mr. B. likeneth us were condemned not only for schism but for heresy also, as appears in Epiphanius, Austin, Eusebius, and others. And, as we have nothing, no not in show, like unto some of them, nor, in truth, unto any of them in the things blameworthy in them, so if Mr. B. were put to justify by the Word of God the condemnation of some of them, it would put him to more trouble than he is aware of.

The Audæans dissented from the Nicene Council about their Easter time. The Luciferians held the soul of man to be extraduced, and were, therefore, accounted heretics, as indeed it was too usual a thing in those days to reject men for heretics upon too light causes.

And for the Donatists unto whom Mr. Giffard and others would so fain fashion us, Mr. B. and all others may see the dissimilitude betwixt them and us in the refutation of that supposed consimilitude.*

A third evil for which Mr. B. would bring our cause into suspicion is,

"The manner of defending our opinions, and proving our assertions by strange and forced expositions of scriptures."

Where he also notes in the margin that, "the truth needs no such ill means to maintain it."

What the means are by which the prelacy against which we witness is maintained, all men know. The flattering of superiors, the oppressing of inferiors, the scoffing, re-

Bishop of Casæ Nigræ; others, Donatus the Great, Bishop of Carthage, as the author of the sectarian designation.

The *Novatians* derived their name from Novatian, a presbyter of the Church of Rome, who contended for greater purity in the church, and was excommunicated in the year 251. The origin of his sect dated from that year, and it flourished until the fifth century. They were the Cathari, or Puritans of their day.

The *Audæans* acknowledge Audæus as founder of their sect. He was a bold reformer of the Church of Rome, and was first excommunicated, and afterwards banished into Scythia, in the fourth century.

* "A Plain Refutation of Mr. Giffard's Book, intituled 'A Short Treatise against the Donatists of England,'" by Henry Barrowe, 1591: republished, 1605.

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viling, imprisoning, and persecuting unto banishment and death of such as oppose it, are the weapons of the prelates' warfare, by which they defend their tottering Babel. And were it not for the arm of flesh by which they hold, and to which they trust, they and their pomp would vanish away like smoke before the wind, so little weight have they or theirs in the consciences of any.

But let us see wherein we mislead the reader by deceitful allegations of scriptures.

"1. In quoting scriptures by the way, that is for things coming in upon occasion, but nothing to the main point," &c.

And, wherefore, is this deceitful dealing, thus to allege the Scriptures? Because the simple reader is hereby made believe, that all is spoken for the question controverted.

He is simple and careless also, that will not search the Scriptures before he believe that they are brought to prove, if he any way suspect it, which whoso doth, cannot be deceived, as is here insinuated.

It were to be wished we both spake and wrote the language of Canaan and none other, Isa. xix. 18, and not only to use, but even to note the scripture phrase, soberly may be, to the information and edification of the reader.

"2. By urging commandments, admonitions, exhortations, dehortations, reprehensions, and godly examples to prove a falsity."

What is falsity but that which is contrary to truth? and so the Word of God being truth, whatsoever is contrary unto any part of it, whether commandment, admonition, exhortation, &c. is false, John xvii. 17, so far forth as it is contrary.

The similitude you take from a natural child, who for his disobedience is not to be reputed a false child, but no good child, is like the rest of your similitudes. The proportion holds not. Men may have such children as ever were, are and will be disobedient to their dying day, and yet they remain their children, whether they will or no: but if any of God's children prove disobedient, and will not be disclaimed, he can dischild them for bastards as they are, and the true children of the devil. John viii. 44.

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"3. In alleging scriptures not to prove that for which to the simple it seems to be alleged, but that which is without controversy, taking the thing in question for granted." For this I take to be his meaning, though he express it ill.

The instance he brings of one of us citing Acts xx. 21, to prove that all truth is not taught in the Church of England, is, I am persuaded, if not worse, mistaken by him. For who would bring Paul's example to show what the ministers of England do, and not rather what they should do? what they do is known well enough, and how both they in preaching the will of God, and the people in obeying it, are stinted at the bishops' pleasure.

"4. By bringing in places setting forth the invisible church and holiness of the members, to set forth the visible church by, as being proper thereto, as 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10."

That the apostle here speaketh not of the invisible, but of the visible church, appeareth not by our bare affirmation, which we might set against Mr. B.'s naked contradiction, yea though he bring in Dr. Alison* in the margin to countenance the matter, but by these reasons.

1. Peter being the apostle of the Jews, Gal. ii. 7, wrote unto them whose apostle he was, and whom he knew dispersed through Pontus, Galatia, &c. 1 Pet. i. 1. But Peter was not the apostle of the invisible, but of the visible church which he knew so dispersed, where the invisible church is only known unto God, 2 Tim. ii. 19.

2. The apostle useth the words of Moses to the visible church of the Jews, Exod. xix. 6, which do therefore well agree to the visible church unto the gospel, whose excellency, graces and holiness, do surmount the former by many degrees.

3. Peter writes to a church wherein were elders and a flock depending upon them, to be fed and governed by them, 1 Pet. v. 1, 2, 3, which to affirm of the invisible church is not only a visible, but even a palpable error.

4. The apostle writes to them which had the Word preached amongst them, chap. i. 25. And this Mr. B. himself, page 118, 119, makes a note and testimony of the visible church,

* A plain Confutation of a Treatise of Brownism, published by some of that Faction, by Dr. R. Alison, 1590.

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and to that purpose quotes the former chapter, ver. 23, as he doth also this very chapter, ver. 5, which is the same with ver. 9, 10, to prove the form of the visible church. And thus I hope it appears to all men upon what good grounds this man thus boldly leadeth us with deceitful dealing in the Scriptures. And this instance, I desire the reader the more diligently to observe as being singled out by Mr. B. as a picked witness against us, and countenanced by Dr. Alison's concurring testimony, but, especially, because it points out the apostolic churches, clean, in contrary colours to the English synagogues, being unholy and profane; and this is the cause why Mr. B. and others are so loth to have this scripture meant of the visible church.

5. "By inferences, and references, as if this be one, this must follow, and this Mr. B. calls a deceivable and crooked way for the entangling of the simple."

To this I have answered formerly, page 20, and do again answer, that necessary consequences and inferences are both lawful and necessary.

If Mr. B. had to deal with a papist against purgatory or with an anabaptist for the baptizing of infants, he should be compelled, except I be deceived, to draw his arrows out of this quiver. And what are consequences regulated by the Word, which sanctifieth all creatures, 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5, but that sanctified use of reason? and will any reasonable man deny the use and discourse of reason? "If all the things which Jesus did, had been written, the world could not have contained the books," John xx. 23: and if all the duties which lie upon the church to perform had been written in express terms, as Mr. B. requires, a world of worlds could not contain the books which should have been written. Neither are inferences and references justly made, any way to be accounted windings, but plain passages to the truth, trodden before us by the Lord Jesus and all his holy apostles, which scarce allege one scripture of three, out of Moses and the prophets, but by way of inference, as all that will, may see.

But the truth is, Mr. B. hath so many times been driven to so gross absurdities by a consequence or two about this cause, as he utterly abhors the very memory of all conse-

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quences, and it seems would have it enacted, that never consequence should be more urged.

To conclude, whatsoever it pleaseth this man to suggest, the main grounds, for which we stand touching the communion, government, ministry, and worship of the visible church, are expressly contained in the Scriptures, and that as we are persuaded, so plainly, that as like Habakkuk's vision, he that runs may read them. Hab. ii. 2.

The 4th guess against us is,

"That we have not the approbation of any of the reformed churches for our course, and that where our confession of faith is without allowance by them, they give on the contrary the right hand of fellowship to the Church of England."

This is the same in substance with the first instance of probability, and that which followeth in the next place the same with them both. And Mr. B. by his so ordinary pressing us with human testimonies, shows himself to be very barren of Divine authority: as hath been truly noted by another. Nature teacheth every creature, in all danger to fly first and oftenest to the chief instruments, either of offence, or defence, wherein it trusteth, as the bull to his horn, the boar to his tusk, and the bird unto her wing: right so this man shows wherein his strength lies, and wherein he trusts most, by his so frequent and usual shaking the horn and whetting the tusk of mortal man's authority against us.

But for the reformed churches the truth is, they neither do imagine, no nor will easily be brought to believe that the frame of the Church of England stands as it doth: neither have they any mind to take knowledge of those things, or to enter into examination of them. The approbation which they give of you, as Mr. Ainsworth hath observed, as indeed it is of special observation, is in respect of such general truths of doctrine, as wherein we also for the most part acknowledge you: which, notwithstanding you deny in a great measure in the particulars, and practice. But touching the gathering and governing of the church, which are the main heads controverted betwixt you and us; they give you not so much as the left hand of

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fellowship, but do, on the contrary, turn their backs upon you.

The difference betwixt you and them in the gathering and constituting of churches, is as great as betwixt compulsive conformity unto the service-book and ceremonies, which is your estate, and voluntary submission unto the gospel, by which all and every member of them is joined to the church, and as, is betwixt the reign of one lord bishop over many churches, and the government of a presbytery or company of elders over one.

And if you would take view of this difference nearer home, do but cast your eyes to your next neighbours of Scotland, and there you shall see the most zealous Christians choosing rather to lose liberty, country, and life than to stoop to a far more easy yoke than you bear. Yea what need I send you out of your own horizon? The implacable and mortal hatred the prelates bear unto the ministers and people, wishing the government and ministry received in the reformed churches, proclaims aloud the utter enmity betwixt them, and your unreformed Church of England, of which I pray you hear with patience what some of your own have testified. "Those that will needs be our pastors and spiritual fathers are become beasts, as the prophet Jeremy saith. And if we should open our mouths, to sue for the true shepherds and overseers indeed, unto whose direction we ought to be committed, the rage of these wolves is such, as this endeavour would almost be the price of our lives."* And do these churches like sisters go hand-in-hand together as is pretended?

Now for us, where Mr. B. affirmeth that we published our confession but without allowance, if I saw not his frowardness in the things he knows, I should marvel at his boldness in the things whereof he is ignorant. We published the confession of our faith to the Christian universities in the Low Countries† and elsewhere, entreating them

* "Discovery of Dr. Bancroft's Slanders."

† "The Confession of Faith of certain English People living in Exile in the Low Countries." 1596. This work was reprinted at Amsterdam in 1598, and subscribed by Francis Johnson and Henry Ainsworth. It was dedicated to the reverend and learned men, students of Holy Scripture in the Christian Universities of Leyden,

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in the Lord, either to convince our errors by the Word of God, if so any might be found, or if our testimony in their judgments agreed with the same Word, to approve it either by writing, or silence, as they thought good. Now what university, church, or person amongst them hath once enterprised our conviction? which without doubt some would have done, as with such heretics or schismatics as arise amongst them, had they found cause?

Thus much of the learned abroad: in the next place Mr. B. draws us to the learned at home, from whose dislike of us he takes his fifth likelihood, which he thus frameth.

"5. The condemnation of this way by our own divines, both living and dead, against whom either for godliness of life, or truth of doctrine, otherwise than for being their opposites, they can take no exception."

No marvel: we may not admit of parties for judges: how is it possible we should be approved of them in the things wherein we witness against them? And if this argument be good or likely, then is it likely that, neither the reformists have the truth in the Church of England, nor the prelates, for there are many, and those both godly and learned, which in their differences, do oppose, and that very vehemently the one the other.

Now, as for mine own part, I do willingly acknowledge the learning and godliness of most of the persons named by Mr. B., and do honour the very memory of some of them, so do I neither think them so learned, but they might err; nor so godly, but in their error they might reproach the truth they saw not. I do indeed confess to the glory of God, and mine own shame, that a long time before I entered this way, I took some taste of the truth in it by some treatises published in justification of it, which, the Lord knoweth, were sweet as honey unto my mouth; and the very principal thing, which for the time quenched all further appetite in me, was the over-valuation which I

in Holland, of St. Andrews, Scotland, of Heidelberg, Geneva, and the other like famous schools of learning in the Low Countries, Scotland, Germany, and France.

It passed through several editions, with slight variations, in subsequent years, and was translated into Latin, and published by Henry Ainsworth alone.

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made of the learning and holiness of these, and the like persons, blushing in myself to have a thought of pressing one hair-breadth before them in this thing, behind whom I knew myself to come so many miles in all other things; yea, and even of late times, when I had entered into a more serious consideration of these things, and, according to the measure of grace received, searched the Scriptures, whether they were so or no, and by searching found much light of truth; yet was the same so dimmed and overclouded with the contradictions of these men and others of the like note, that had not the truth been in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, Jer. xx. 9, I had never broken those bonds of flesh and blood, wherein I was so straitly tied, but had suffered the light of God to have been put out in mine own unthankful heart by other men's darkness.

This reverence every man stands bound to give to the graces of God in other men, that in his differences from them, he be not suddenly nor easily persuaded, but that being jealous of his own heart, he undertake the examination of things and so proceed, with fear and trembling, and so having tried all things, keep that which is good. 1 Thess. v. 21. So shall he neither wrong the graces of God in himself, nor in others. But on the other side, for a man so far to suffer his thoughts to be conjured into the circle of any mortal man or men's judgment, as either to fear to try what is offered to the contrary, in the balance of the sanctuary, or finding it to bear weight, to fear to give sentence on the Lord's side, yea though it be against the mighty, this is to honour men above God, and to advance a throne above the throne of Christ, who is Lord and King for ever.

And to speak that in this case, which by doleful experience I myself have found, many of the most forward professors in the kingdom are well nigh as superstitiously addicted to the determinations of their guides and teachers, as the ignorant papists unto theirs, accounting it not only needless curiosity, but even intolerable arrogancy, to call into question the things received from them by tradition.

But how much better were it for all men to lay aside these and the like prejudices, that so they might under-

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stand the things which concern their peace, and seeing with their own eyes, might live by their own faith!

And for these famous men here named by Mr. B., with whose oppositions as with Zedekiah's horns of iron he would push us here and everywhere, as we do bear their reproofs with patience, and acknowledge their worths without envy, or detraction, so do we know they were but men, and so through human frailty might be abused as well, or rather as ill, to support Antichrist in a measure, as others before them have been, though godly, and learned, as they. It will not be denied but the fathers, as they are called, Ignatius, Irenæus, Tertullian, Cyprian, Ambrose, Jerome, Austin, and the rest were both godly and learned; yet no man, if he have but even saluted them, can be ignorant, what way, though unwittingly, they made for the advancement of Antichrist which followed after them: and if they, notwithstanding their learning and godliness, thus ushered him into the world, why might not others, and that more likely, though learned and godly as the former, help to bear up his train? especially considering, that as his rising was not, so neither could his fall be perfected at once. And for us, what do we more or otherwise for the most part, than walk in those ways into which divers of the persons by Mr. B. named, have directed us by the Word of God, in manifesting unto us by the light thereof what the ministry, government, worship, and fellowship of the gospel ought to be? we then being taught, and believing, that the Word of God is a light and a lantern not only to our eyes, but to our feet and paths, as the psalmist speaketh, Psa. cxix. 105, cannot possibly conceive how we should justly be blamed by these men for observing the ordinances, which themselves not only acknowledged but contended for, as appointed by Christ's testament to be kept inviolable till his appearing, as some of them have expressly testified.

To conclude, let not the Christian reader cast our persons, and the persons of our opposites, whether these or others, in the balance together, but rather our cause and reasons with their oppositions and the grounds of them, and so with a steady hand and impartial eye weigh and poise cause with cause, that so the truth of God may not

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be prejudiced by men's persons, nor held in respect of them.

And to your marginal note, viz., that none of us whom you call guides did fall to this course before we were in trouble and could not enjoy our liberty as we desired, I do only answer this one thing, that all and every one of us might have enjoyed both our liberty and peace, at the same woeful rate with you and your fellows.

The sixth likelihood. "The Lord's judgment giving sentence with him and his church against us."

But wherein appears that, Mr. B.?

"1. By the blessing of God," you tell us, "upon your ministry, by which people are won truly to sanctification of life, and that we, on the contrary, work but upon the labours of other men."

Considering the multitude of ministers in the kingdom, and their long continuance in their ministry, there is in the most parts of the land, no such cause of so loud boasts as are here made.

There is nothing more common both in the sermons and writings of the forwarder sort, than their complaints how little good their preaching hath done, howsoever with us, for advantage, they plead the contrary.

But let it be, as Mr. B. saith, that they win men to sanctification of life, and that we work but upon their labours, his own words shall judge him, wherein he doth directly overthrow that he would establish, and establish that he would so fain overthrow.

The ministers of the Church of England do win men to true sanctification of life; then, the people over whom they are set, are not truly sanctified; then, not true saints; then, no true members of the church: and therefore, that, no true body of Christ consisting of such members.

We work upon other men's labours; and so true ordinary elders do, whose office stands in feeding, and not in begetting. The elders which the apostles ordained were set over them which believed in the Lord, Acts xiv. 23; and the overseers or bishops made by the Holy Ghost were over such a flock, as all whereof were purchased with the blood of Christ, so far as men could judge. Acts xx. 28. We do not despise the conversion of a sinner,

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as Mr. B. odiously traduceth us, but do, with men and angels, bless the Lord for that mercy upon ourselves and others, only we dare not stand ministers to an unconverted people nor dispense unto them the holy things of God, to which we know they have no right, how bold soever Mr. B. and his brethren make with the Lord and his ordinances this way. And so I pass to the second proof.

"2. The blessing of God assisting us walking in our way with the reformed churches hath from Luther's time made prosperous our way by him, and other glorious instruments, and in few years spread the truth to many nations," &c.

He that would not in the words before going work upon the labours of other men, will now make boast of them: but instead of proving his likelihoods, by this dealing, he is justly to be reproved of two falsehoods.

The one is, that he will bear the world in hand that his way, and the way of the reformed churches are one, whereas the ways of the Church of England wherein we forsake her, do directly and *ex diametro* cross and thwart the ways of the reformed churches: as appears in these three main heads.

(1.) The reformed churches are gathered of a free people joined together by voluntary profession without compulsion of human laws. On the contrary the Church of England consists of a people forced together violently, by the laws of men, into their provincial, diocesan and parishional churches, as their houses stand, be they never so unwilling or unfit.

(2.) The reformed churches do renounce the ministry of the Church of England: as she doth theirs: not admitting of any by virtue of it to charge of souls: as they speak, where on the contrary all the mass-priests made in Queen Mary's days, which would say their book-service in English, were continued ministers by the same ordination which they received from the Popish prelates.

(3.) The government by archbishops, lord bishops, and their substitutes in the Church of England is abhorred and disclaimed in the reformed churches as antichristian: as is on the contrary the Presbyterian government, in use

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there, by the Church of England refused, as anabaptistical, and seditious.

Now if Mr. B. can at once walk in so many and so contrary ways, he had need have as many feet as the polypus hath.

Secondly, understanding by his church's way, such doctrines and ordinances as wherein we oppose it, it is an empty boast to affirm that the same is spread into other nations. Which are the nations, or what may be their names, which either do retain or have received the prelacy, ministry, service-book, canons and confused commixture of all sorts now in use in the Church of England?

But Mr. B. having, as he boasts, God, angels, and men on his side, proceeds in the next place to plead against us God's judgments, who seemeth, as he saith, from the first beginning to be offended with our course.

And intending, principally, in this whole discourse to oppress us with contumelies, and by them to alienate all men's affections from us, he raketh together into this place, as into a dunghill of slander and misreport, whatsoever he thinks may make us and our cause stink in the nostrils of the reader. And so forging some things in his own brain, and enforcing other things, true in themselves, with most odious aggravations, he presents us to the view of the world, with such personal infirmities and human frailties written in our foreheads, as the Lord hath left upon the sons of men for their humbling. And the world wanting spiritual eyes, and beholding the church of Christ with the eyes of flesh and blood, and seeing it compassed about with so many infirmities, and falling into so many and manifold trials and temptations, is greatly offended, and passeth unrighteous judgment upon the servants of God, and blasphemeth their most holy profession.

But let all men learn not to behold the church of Christ with carnal eyes, which like fearful spies will discourage the people, but with the eyes of faith and good conscience, which like Joshua and Caleb will speak good of the promised land, the spiritual Canaan, the church of God. But to the point.

That Mr. B. may make sure work he strikes at the head,

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and whetteth his tongue like a sword, and shooteth bitter words like arrows at such principal men, as God hath raised up in this cause, whereof some have persevered, and stood fast unto death, others have fallen away in the day of temptation, whose end hath been worse than their beginning.

The first person in whom he instanceth is one Boulton, touching whom he writeth thus: that he being the first broacher of this way came to as fearful an end as Judas did: adding thereupon, that God suffereth not his special instruments called forth otherwise than after a common course to come to such ends.

To this I do first answer, that neither this man was, nor any other of us, is called forth by the Lord otherwise than after a common course: even that which is common to all God's people, which is to come out of Babylon, and to bring their best gifts to Sion for the building of the Lord's temple there.

It is true that Boulton was, though not the first in this way, an elder of a separated church* in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's days, and falling away from his holy profession recanted the same at Paul's Cross, and afterwards hung himself as Judas did. And what marvel if he, which had betrayed Christ in his truth, as Judas did in his person, came to the same fearful end which Judas did?

Nay rather, patience and long-suffering of God is to be marvelled at, that others also, who either have embraced this truth and after fallen from it, or refused to submit unto it when they have both seen and approved it, have not been pursued by the same revengeful hand of God. And for the promise of God's presence with his, Gen. xii. 3; Matt. xxviii. 20; Josh. i. 9, it must ever be taken conditionally, viz. whilst they are with him and do his work faithfully as they ought, and no further.

Now touching Browne it is true, which Mr. B. affirmeth, that, as he forsook the Lord, so the Lord forsook him in his way: and so he did his own people Israel many a time. And if the Lord had not forsaken him he had never

* Under the care of Mr. Fitz, the pastor. Ainsworth's "Counterpoyson," p. 39, edit. 1608.

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so returned back into Egypt as he did to live of the spoils of it, as is said he speaketh.

And for the wicked things, which Mr. B. affirmeth, he did in this way, it may well be as he saith, and the more wicked things he committed in this course, the less like he was to continue long in it, and the more like to return again to his proper centre, the Church of England where he should be sure to find companions enough in any wickedness, as it came to pass.

Lastly, to let pass the universal apostacy of all the bishops, ministers, students in the universities, yea, and of the whole Church of England in Queen Mary's time, (a handful only excepted in comparison,) which the papists might more colourably urge against Mr. B. than he, some few instances against us; the fall of Judas an apostle, Matt. xxvi. 14—16, and 47, 48, 49, and xxvii. 3, 4, 5; of Nicholas one of the first seven deacons, Acts vi. 5; Rev. ii. 15; of Demas one of Paul's special companions in the ministry, 2 Tim. iv. 10, do sufficiently teach us that there is no cause so holy, nor calling so excellent, which is not subject to the invasion of painted and deceitful hypocrites, whose service the Lord, notwithstanding, may use for a time till their whiting be worn off, and then leave them to their own deceivable lusts, which will work their most woful downfall: thereby warning his people not to repose too much upon any mortal man in whom there is no stedfastness, but to cast their eyes upon him alone and upon his truth which changeth not.

Of Mr. Barrowe and Mr. Greenwood's spirit of railing, as this man raileth against them, in another place, p. 85. Only let the indifferent reader judge, whether Mr. B. in blazing abroad the personal infirmities of his adversaries without any occasion, neither sparing the living nor the dead, have not come to the very highest pitch of the most natural railing that may be. A practice which all sober-minded men do abhor from.

The next that comes in Mr. B.'s way are the two brethren, Mr. Francis and Mr. George Johnson, whose contentions he exaggerateth what he can to make both their persons and cause odious. True it is that George

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Johnson, together with his father taking his part, were excommunicated by the church for contention arising at the first, upon no great occasion, whereupon many bitter and reproachful terms were uttered both in word and writing; George becoming, as Mr. B. chargeth him, "a disgraceful libeller."*

It is to us, just cause of humiliation all the days of our lives, that we have given, and do give by our differences, such advantages to them which seek occasion against us to blaspheme the truth: though this may be a just judgment of God upon others which seek offences, that seeking they may find them, to the hardening of their hearts in evil. But let men turn their eyes which way soever they will, and they shall see the same scandals. Look to the first and best churches planted by the apostles themselves, and behold dissensions, scandal, strife, biting one of another. Rom. xvi. 17; 1 Cor. i. 11, iii. 3; Gal. v. 15.

About two hundred years after Christ, what a stir was there about moonshine in water, as we speak, betwixt the east and west churches, when Victor Bishop of Rome excommunicated the churches in Asia for not keeping the Jewish feast of Easter at the same time with the Church of Rome! And to come nearer our own times, how bitter was Luther against Zuinglius and Calvin in the matter of the Sacrament! And how implacable is the hatred at this

* The dress of Mrs. Francis Johnson was the occasion of great contention and strife in the church at Amsterdam over which Mr. Francis Johnson was pastor. Governor Bradford, in his "Dialogue" states, that "she was a young widow when he (Mr. Francis Johnson) married her, and had been a merchant's wife, by whom he had a good estate, and was a godly woman: and because she wore such apparel as she had been formerly used to, which was neither excessive nor immodest, for their chiefest exceptions were against her wearing of some whalebone in the bodice and sleeves of her gown, corked shoes, and other such like things as the citizens of her rank then used to wear. And although, for offence sake, she and he were willing to reform the fashions of them, so far as might be without spoiling of their garments, yet it would not content them (George Johnson and his father) except they came up full to their size."—Vide the Dialogue in "Young's Chronicles of the Pilgrim Fathers," p. 446. Boston. 8vo. 1841. "Hanbury's Historical Memorials," vol. i. p. 99.

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day of them whom they call Lutherans against the followers of the other parties!

Take yet one instance more, and in it, a view of the very height of human frailty this way. The exiled church at Frankfort, in Queen Mary's days, bred and nourished within itself such contentions, as that one accused another to the magistrate of treason, whereupon Mr. Knox was compelled to fly for fear of trouble.*

I could also allege to the present purpose, the state of the reformed churches amongst which we live, whose violent oppositions, and fiery contentions, do far exceed all ours: but I take no delight in writing these things, neither do I think the needless dissensions which have been amongst us, the less evil because they are so common to us with others, but these things I have laid down to make it appear, that Mr. B. here useth none other weapon against us than Jews and pagans might have done against Christians and papists against such as held the truth against them, yea, and than atheists and men of no religion might take up against all the professions and religions in the world.

And, to go no further, the irreconcileable enmity betwixt the prelates and reformists about cap, surplice, cross and the like, which the patrons of them acknowledge trifles, might well have stopped Mr. B.'s mouth from upbraiding any with fiery contentions upon small occasions.

And touching the heavy sentence of excommunication, by which the father and brother were delivered up to the devil, as Mr. B. speaketh, I desire the reader to consider, that, if excommunication be, as indeed it is, so heavy a sentence, and that by it, the party sentenced be delivered over to the devil; the Church of England is in heavy case which plays with excommunications as children do with rattles. And to allude to the word Mr. B. useth, in what a devilish case are either the prelates and convocation house which have *ipso facto* excommunicated all that speak or deal against their state, ceremonies, and service-book, since the curse causeless falls upon the head of him from

* Vide "A Brieff Discours off the Troubles begonne at Franckford in Germany, Anno Domini, 1554." 4to. edit. 1575; lately reprinted by John Petheram, 71, Chancery Lane, London, 1846.

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whom it comes, or the reformists, whereof Mr. B. would be one by fits, and such as seek for and enterprise reformation! And for the particular in hand, howsoever it may seem an odious thing unto the natural man, which savours not the things of God, nor the impartial ordinances of the Lord Jesus, and would be a matter of wonder that a man should censure, or consent to the censuring of his father or brother, in the Church of England, where a good word of a friend or a small bribe may stay the excommunication of the grossest offender, yet if there be just cause, though with extraordinary sorrow for the occasion, Christ in his ordinance must be preferred before father and brother, yea and mother and sister also. Matt. x. 37. Yea, and it shall be the seal of his ministry upon that son which in the observance of the word of the Lord, and in the keeping of his covenant saith unto his father, mother, brother, yea and own children, "I know you not." Deut. xxxiii. 8, 9.

The next Mr. B. objecteth is Mr. Burnet,* who died of the plague in prison, whither he was committed by the arch-prelate.

And so did Mr. Holland and Mr. Parker in the same city, at the same time, as I remember: and so did Junius and Trelcatius the two divinity professors at Leyden, at another time upon the same infection. And was the plague God's fearful correcting rod upon these men because their religion was false, or rather would any man knowing the Scriptures, and the Lord's dispensations towards his church argue as this man doth? "If judgment thus begin at God's house, what shall the end of them be which obey not the gospel of God?" 1 Pet. iv. 17.

But if Mr. B. will bring against us all the persons which the bishops have killed in their prisons, by this and the like means, as David did Uriah by the sword of the Ammonites, he may overwhelm us with witnesses: but his argument shall be much what of the same nature with that of the Caian heretics, which affirm that Cain was a good man, and conceived by a superior power unto Abel, because he prevailed against him, and slew him.

* Bornit, as written by Mr. Bernard.

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Lastly for Mr. Smyth, as his instability and wantonness of wit is his sin and our cross,* so let Mr. B. and all others take heed that it be not their hardening in evil.

Mr. B. in proceeding to point out the hand of God writing heavy things against us, chargeth us, by Mr. White's testimony,† with such notable crimes, and detestable uncleannesses, as from which they in the Church of England either truly fearing God, or but making an apparent show thereof are so preserved by God, as they cannot be tainted with such evils, as some of us ofttimes fall into.

As the witness well fits the cause and person alleging him, who, according to the proverb, may ask his fellow, &c., so have his slanders been answered, as Mr. Bernard knows, whereof it seems the party himself is ashamed, and so might Mr. B. have been, had he not been shameless in accusing the brethren.

Now for the things objected, it is first to be noted how Mr. B. affirmeth that none with them either truly fearing God, or making an apparent show thereof, falls into such notable crimes, &c., wherein he acknowledgeth that a great part of the Church of England neither truly fears God, nor makes apparent show of it. How then are all of them saints by calling, and where is that profession of faith for which they are to be held true members of the Church? And what detestable crimes the members of the Church of England fall into, if there were none other testimony, the very gallows and gibbets in every country declare sufficiently, upon which for treason, witchcraft, incest, buggery,‡ rape, murders and the like, the members of that Church, so living and dying, do receive condign punish-

* The Rev. John Smyth, of Amsterdam, to whom frequent reference is made by Mr. Robinson, in his various works.

† "A Discovery of Brownism: or a Brief declaration of some of the errors and abominations daily practised and increased among the English Company of the Separation remaining for the present at Amsterdam in Holland. By Thomas White." London. 1605. 4to., pp. 29. A reply to this scurrilous and malignant pamphlet was published by Francis Johnson, entitled "An Enquiry and Answer of Thomas White, his Discovery of Brownism. By Francis Johnson, Pastor of the Exiled English Church at Amsterdam in Holland." 1606. 4to. pp. 92.

‡ Unnatural crimes.

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ment. Where with us if any such enormities arise, as what temptations have befallen any we are subject unto the same, those monsters, without their answerable repentance, are by the power of Christ cut off from the body, and do for the most part return to their proper element, the English synagogue.

But what if all were true which Mr. B. avoucheth, what advantage hath he more against us than the heathen Corinthians had against the church there, where such fornication was found, as was not once named among the Gentiles? 1 Cor. v. 1.

Mr. B. having thus handled, as you see, some particular and principal persons, proceeds to set upon the whole body in general, as if, with the accuser of the brethren, he had obtained liberty to strike the same from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot with the boils and botches of reproach; and, therefore, writeth, that if men be but inclinable to this way, they judge the minister to have lost the power of his ministry, whereas the fault is in the alteration of their own affections; and if they be once entered into it, they are then so bewitched, as that, where before they were humble and tractable, they then become proud and wilful; where before they could with understanding discern betwixt cause and cause, they then lick up all that comes from themselves as oracles though never so absurd; where before they could feel in themselves lively marks of the children of God, and so judge of others, they then are persuaded against former faith to think, that neither themselves had, nor others have any outward marks of the children of God.

Let the reader here observe in the first place, that Mr. B. accounts all them inclinable to this way, which dislike conformity and subscription in the ministers; for them only Dr. Downame, whose epistle before his second sermon * he quotes in the margin, intendeth, and they only are the men which judge the conforming ministers to have lost the power of their ministry. And that their judgment is most sound, generally, of such ministers as having formerly refused ceremonies and subscription do

* "Two Sermons; one commending the Ministry in general: the other the Office of Bishops." 4to. London. 1608.

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afterward bow unto the same, all men of understanding do discern.

To the challenge of pride and wilfulness upon them in this way, though before they were humble and tractable, I do answer, that as true humility is ever commendable, so is there also a sinful subjection and submission of mind, by which spiritual tyrants, according to their fleshly wisdom in voluntary religion, would rule over the consciences of the simple, of which the apostle warneth us, Col. ii. 18, which superstitious humility or humble superstition, if the servants of God begin to shake off and to stand for that liberty, so dearly bought by Christ, and so highly commended by the apostles of Christ, then begin these imperious masters to rage, thinking by reproaches, to compel them again under that subjection, in which by former delusions they could not contain them. Thus dealt the bloody bishops with the servants of God in Queen Mary's days, calling them proud, wilful, conceited, and what evil not? and very well do the like accusations become Mr. B.'s mouth in the like case.

Whether our opinions, which we are charged by Mr. B. to lick up as oracles, be absurd or no, will appear in the discussing of them in the sequel of the book: in the meanwhile this is most true and undeniable, that a great part of the spleen uttered against us in this invective, grew from this very cause, that sundry of his hearers would not lick up whatsoever he poured out unto them though bitter as gall: as "that ministers were not brethren properly," that "the church had some power to excommunicate because the minister," as the official's executioner, might read the sentence, "that the churchwardens were elders, the midwives widows," and many the like, which to reckon up is to confute sufficiently.

Lastly, it is a great wrong which Mr. B. offereth us in affirming, that, "if we be once in this fraternity," as he scoffeth at our holy covenant, "we then dislike our former graces, and are content to be persuaded against our former faith and feeling in ourselves of the lively marks of the children of God, and all because we were as a deer without the compass of our park," as he speaketh.

We do with all thankfulness to our God acknowledge, and with much comfort remember, those lively feelings of

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God's love, and former graces wrought in us, and that one special grace amongst the rest by which we have been enabled to draw ourselves into visible covenant, and holy communion. Yea with such comfort and assurance do we call to mind the Lord's work of old this way in us, as we doubt not but our salvation was sealed up unto our consciences, by most infallible marks and testimonies, which could not deceive, before we conceived the least thought of separation; and so we hope it is with many others in the Church of England, yea and of Rome too.

And the more ample measure of grace, and fulness of assurance that any man hath received of the Lord, the more carefully is he to endeavour, in all good conscience, the knowledge and obedience of all and every one of the holy commandments of God, and not to satisfy himself in his present feelings, thinking his salvation sure enough, and so his obedience full enough, for this were to serve God for wages, as hypocrites do, but rather, with the apostle, forgetting those things which are behind, and forcing to those things which are before, let him follow hard to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Phil. iii. 13, 14. And whatsoever Mr. B. judgeth of a deer without the park pale wherein he should be, sure it is, that he is none of Christ's sheep, visibly or in respect of men, which is without Christ's sheepfold. For "there is one sheepfold, and one shepherd." John x. 16.

The last conjecture gathered against our cause is,

"The ill success it hath had these very many years, being no more increased, where the increasings of God are great," &c.

As it is always safer to proceed by the causes and reasons of things, than by their events and success, so especially is this rule of use in the case of religion, whose way, as it is in itself narrow and found by few, how much more being straitened by the fiery persecutions of the wicked world.

Indeed the Church of England hath advantage of us, and, as I suppose, of all the churches in the world for monstrous speedy growth, and increase, for that of a synagogue of Satan consisting of popish idolaters, and cruel murderers of the saints, it grew from top to toe into a true and entire body of Christ, of a sudden and before

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the greatest part of it so much as heard the gospel preached in any measure for their conversion.

But consider herein Mr. B. dealing: he spares no ungodly means in this his book, and otherwise, by slandering our persons, by falsifying our opinions, by exaggerating our infirmities, by incensing the magistrate against us, to suppress us, and yet reproacheth us because we grow no faster: dealing with us much what as the Jews did with Christ when they blindfolded him first, and then bade him prophesy who smote him. Luke xxii. 64.

But let it be as Mr. B. would have it, that the cause of religion is to be measured by the multitude of them that profess it, yet must it further be considered, that religion is not always sown and reaped in one age: "one soweth and another reapeth." John iv. 37. John Huss and Jerome of Prague finished their testimony in Bohemia, and at Constance, a hundred years before Luther; and Wickliffe in England well nigh as long before them, and yet neither the one nor the other with the like success unto Luther.

And the many that are already gathered by the mercy of God into the kingdom of his Son Jesus, and the nearness of many more through the whole land, for the regions are white unto the harvest, do promise within less than an hundred years, if our sins and theirs make not us and them unworthy of this mercy, a very plenteous harvest.

That we have been, here and there, up and down, without sure footing, is our portion in this present evil world, common to us with the more worthy servants of God going before us, who have wandered in wildernesses and mountains and dens and caves of the earth. Heb. xi. 38.

The same answer may serve for that other exprobation of us, that we only have toleration in a place, where the enemies of Christ may be as well as we. Yea, though we were not so much as tolerated, but on the contrary persecuted to the death, where the enemies of Christ were not only tolerated, but even approved, yea, the persecutors of us, for the cause of Christ, what were this but to partake in the fellowship of his afflictions with the holy prophets and apostles, and other his most faithful servants? And I will tell you, Mr. B. in the presence of God what my persuasion is in this case, that as we have only toleration in the city where

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we live, where the enemies of Christ are tolerated with us, so all that truly fear God, whether ministers or private people, have only toleration in your church, and no approbation by the canons and constitutions of it.

And for the leading of the people out of one nation into another of a strange language, it is our great cross, but no sin at all, and should rather move you and others to compassion towards us, than thus to insult over us in our exile. But your addition, that we do this without compulsion is most shameless, you yourself both beholding and furthering our most violent persecution. But see your equal dealing with us: whilst we tarried in the kingdom you blamed us because we got us not gone, now we are gone you find fault we tarry not.

For your marginal note that, "Israel left not Egypt without Pharaoh's leave, nor the Jews, Babylon without Cyrus's consent." To let pass the leave which Pharaoh gave the Israelites to depart, when to reduce them back, he and his people followed them into the sea; they could not depart sooner, though they would, being held in bondage by their enemies; yet when Moses was in danger of his life as we are, he fled as we do. Exod. ii. 15.

Besides, the Israelites had the certain known time of their captivities limited and prescribed by God, which they were to tarry. Gen. xv. 13, 14; Exod. xii. 40, 41; Jer. xxv. 11, 12; Dan. ix. 2; Ezra i. 1, which is no way our case.

And what other do we in flying than the holy prophets and apostles have done before us, Exod. ii. 15; 1 Sam. xviii. 10, xxvii. 1, 2; Acts ix. 25; and than the protestants did in Queen Mary's reign, that fled to Frankfort, Geneva, and other places, where they understood not the language of other nations? yea than the Lord Jesus himself hath sanctified, not only by his commandment, or licence at the least, Matt. x. 23, but also in his own person, flying into Egypt in his mother's arms? Matt. ii. 13, 14.

Reason see I none, why this man should thus blame us for our flying, except with the Montanists, he thought flight in the time of persecution unlawful.*

Lastly, Mr. B. concludeth his likelihoods with "a cursed

* Mr. Robinson discusses this subject fully in a treatise on Public Communion, vol. iii. chap. 3.

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farewell which," saith he, "we leave in all places, like a scorching flame singeing where it comes, so as the growth of all things are hindered by it."

And this observation he fathers upon me, though, in truth, it be his own bastard. I affirmed indeed that where this truth came, it left the places barren of good things, in taking away the best sort of people, but this I spake to no such purpose as is here insinuated.

The scorching flame, which hinders all things in the Church of England, is the prelacy, to which, by universal and infallible observation, no man applies himself, no nor inclines, but with a sensible decay of the former graces which he seemed to have. He that but once enters into the high priest's hall to warm himself at the fire there, shall scarce return without a scorched conscience.

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CHAPTER III.

MR. BERNARD'S REASONS AGAINST SEPARATION DISCUSSED.

HAVING formerly viewed Mr. Bernard's bare probabilities, we will now come to debate his reasons against separation. The first sort whereof are grounded upon the entrance into this cause, which he makes very sinful, and cursed, because of the great evils, which, saith he, ensue thereupon.

SECT. I.—ON ALLEGED DISCLAIMING OF FELLOWSHIP WITH OTHER CHRISTIANS.

And the first of these imputed evils is, "That we not only disclaim and condemn the corruptions and notorious wicked, but withal forsake all Christian profession amongst them, casting off the Word by which we were made alive, the ministers our fathers which have begot us, yea and all fellowship of the godly with them, and so account them ever false Christians, and idolaters, having a false faith, false repentance, and false baptism."

And from these evils, thus suggested, he both dissuades the reader with some passionate rhyme in the margin, and deters him by sundry bitter curses cast out against us, both in the margin and text.

There is no truth of doctrine, nor ordinance of Christ taught or practised in the Church of England which we enjoy not, with far more liberty, better right, and greater purity than any person in England doth or can, as Mr. B. knoweth right well; and for the good graces of God in many, we do both know, and acknowledge them, and it is our great grief, though their own fault, that we cannot have communion with the persons in whom so eminent graces of God are: and if there be any of them which are sorry for our departure from the assemblies, we are much more sorry, and so have more cause, for their continuance in the same. In which their estate, whilst we withdraw ourselves from them, we do in no sort condemn their persons, which stand or fall to the Lord, much less any

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good thing in them, or truth amongst them. It is one thing, simply to condemn that which is good for evil, and another thing to forbear the use of it, in the concrete, for the commixture of evil, from which, in that use, it is inseparable.

When Paul forbade the Corinthians to eat and drink in the idol temples, 1 Cor. x. 20, 21, he did not condemn meat and drink. Neither did the same apostle when he directed the same Corinthians to excommunicate the incestuous person, and so to have no fellowship with him, 1 Cor. v., enjoin them to renounce the faith which that person professed, or the baptism which they with him had received.

And as a church excommunicating an offender for some one scandalous sin, and so refusing all communion with him, cannot be challenged for renouncing or rejecting the faith which that person professeth, or any other personal good thing appearing in him; so neither may any person or persons forsaking a church and all fellowship with it, for some one or few just causes, justly be accused as renouncing or disclaiming the other good things there remaining.

Lastly, let me ask Mr. B. whether he disclaim one God subsisting in three persons, and one Lord Jesus, God and man, and withal, the Christian virtues of zeal, patience, temperance, humility, meekness, and the like? And why not he, as well in refusing communion with the Church of Rome, where these things are to be found, as we in disclaiming the Church of England, where the same and other the like good things are known to be?

Thus when a man's eyes are blinded, by partiality towards himself, and his mouth opened by malice against his adversary, it is marvellous to see what unequal judgment he will pass.

But lest Mr. B. in charging our beginning, as he doth, as accursed, uncharitable, unnatural, and ungodly, might seem to curse where God curseth not, he annexeth certain portions of Scripture, which he also sets down at large, as though they made largely against us, and our separation; and the end why he allegeth them is to prove that there is cause of rejoicing in the Church of England. The Scrip-

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tures are these, Rom. xv. 17, 18; Acts x. 34, 35; Rom. xiv. 17, 18. To which I do answer first, in general:

There may be, and ofttimes is, cause of rejoicing in the events and issues of things by a special hand of God determining them, though the secondary means and instruments which the Lord useth for the producing and bringing forth of these issues and events, as of light out of darkness, be most accursed. Wherein more, or else, hath a Christian heart cause of rejoicing than in the death of Christ? And yet what can be imagined more abominable than the means and instruments of working it?

But to speak nearer Mr. B.'s purpose. If some Jesuit, or other, sent by the pope into America amongst the pagans and infidels, should there persuade any to believe and confess one God, and his Son Jesus Christ, made man for the redemption of the world, and that they should also give up their lives for these truths, there were cause of rejoicing in their testimony, and yet I suppose Mr. B., knowing as he doth, would be loth to have communion in the Jesuit's ministry. More particularly, the apostle, Rom. xv. 17, 18, in commendation of his apostleship, lays down the effects of it and how great cause of rejoicing he had, that God by his ministry had planted the churches of the Gentiles, whom he further describes by their obedience in word and deed.

And how serves this for the Church of England? Thus it serves first, to exclude all those word-saints for whom Mr. B. pleads so much in his book.

Secondly, it serves to show what small cause there is of rejoicing for the English Churches, being planted of such universally and so still continuing, as are indeed abominable and disobedient, and to every good work reprobate.

The second scripture is Acts x. 34, 35, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no accepter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted of him." And is it so?

What sacrilegious presumption, then, is it in the Church of England to compel God to accept of persons, and to accept for his people and servants, such as neither fear him, nor work righteousness, but the contrary! to offer up

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their persons and sacrifices to him in the name of Christ in whom they have no portion! to seal up the covenant of his grace and peace unto them in the sacraments, with whom it never came into his heart to strike hand, neither hath he peace with them!

The third scripture is Rom. xiv. 17, 18, "The kingdom of God is not meat, nor drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; for whosoever in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God," &c.

Hence to let pass the drift of the apostle in this place elsewhere opened, thus much must necessarily follow, that where righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost are not, nor men in those things serving Christ, there the kingdom of God is not, nor these men his subjects. And where God's kingdom is not, there is the kingdom of Satan, and they that are not the subjects of the one, are the slaves of the other. And so I leave it to the godly reader to judge whether the assemblies in England gathered at the first, and at this day consisting of such persons for the most part as do not thus nor in these things, viz. righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost serve Christ, but the contrary, can be rightly and by the Word of God accounted the kingdom of God and church of Christ. Thus the three scriptures which Mr. B. stretched out like a threefold cord to hold men in the assemblies, are in truth and in their right meaning as a three-stringed whip to scourge those that fear God out of them.

"With such a renunciation of the truth must be entertained much untruth," saith Mr. B., "as, first, thou must believe their way to be the truth of God, then condemn our church as a false church;" when themselves have published that the differences betwixt us and them are but corruptions. Now corruptions do not make a false church, but a corrupt church, as corruptions in a man make but a corrupt, but no false man.

If we bear witness of ourselves, our witness is not true, but if the Word of God bear witness with us, and against you, it must stand. And for the advantage which you suppose you have gained at us, where we acknowledge our differences to be only your corruptions, it will nothing at all

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enrich you, or better your church: for there are corruptions essential, and in the very causes constitutive, matter, and form, as well as elsewhere; there are corruptions which eat out the very heart of a thing, as well as such as hinder the working only, or stain the work. And we may truly say of all the abominable doctrines and devices in Rome, that they are but so many corruptions of those pure truths and holy ordinances which that church at the first received from Christ the Lord.

And for your similitude of a man, whom you say corruptions make not a false man, but a corrupt man, you are deceived in it, whether you consider a man naturally or morally. Naturally, what is death but the corruption of the man? as generation and corruption are opposed. And what is rottenness but the corruption of the body? Now these do more than make a corrupt man, or corrupt body, they do destroy the very being. But consider a man morally, as in the case of religion he must be considered, and then moral corruptions and vices do either make a false man; or else a traitor, a thief, a cozener is a true man, which patronage I hope Mr. B. will not undertake.

SECT. II.—ON ALLEGED EVILS OF THE SYSTEM.

The second rank of reasons which Mr. B. brings against us are "certain grievous sins" wherewith, he saith, all in our way are polluted, for which according to our own principle no man may join himself unto us.

The sins he nameth are, "a renunciation of God's mercy," and of all good things, and men with them, "unthankfulness to God and the church," "spiritual uncharitableness," "audacious censuring," "a desire to hinder, yea to extinguish all the spiritual good they publicly enjoy, and a wish of destruction unto the people, and the like."

Grievous accusations certainly, but if to accuse be to convince, who shall be innocent? not the Lord Jesus himself, not his holy apostles: whose examples in undergoing the like reproaches, and in patient bearing of the same at the hands of wicked men, if we had not before our eyes, either our hearts would break in us for sorrow, or we

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should be provoked to render reproach for reproach, and so sin against God.

Our first supposed sin is "that woeful entrance beforenamed," for which I refer the reader to that which hath been before answered.

"But they in England," saith Mr. B., "enter by baptism, renouncing the devil and sin." So do the papists as loud as they, and with as many godfathers and godmothers, crossing and blessing themselves against the devil, and all his works as much as they do. And for the renunciation of God's mercy and all good men, and good things in them in the Church of England, because we refuse communion there, it is a foul charge laid upon us, but to which we are no more liable, than were the Levites when they forsook Jeroboam's church and repaired to Jerusalem, "the place which the Lord had chosen." 2 Chron. xi. 13, 14. For in Israel, which they forsook, were to be found both good persons and things. 1 Kings xiv. 13, xix. 18.

Now where in the last place Mr. B. chargeth us not to make unclean what God hath cleansed, Acts x. 15, we on the contrary advise him not to account that clean, which sin and antichrist doth defile.

Let him or any other man on earth show unto us, by the Word of God, that a church gathered and consisting of persons for the most part defiled with all manner of impiety, is cleansed by God; or that the daily sacrifice, the service-book, is as a lamb without spot; or that the spiritual courts, so miscalled, are sanctified of God for the government of his kingdom on earth; or that the court-keepers, the arch-flamins and flamins, the provincial and diocesan bishops with their chancellors, commissaries, archdeacons, and other officers, are his holy ones upon whom he hath put his Urim and Thummim, and then, let us bear our rebuke, if we do not return to the Church of England and humble ourselves under her hand, as Hagar did herself under the hand of her mistress. Gen. xvi. 9.

The second sin wherewith Mr. B. chargeth us is "our great unthankfulness, 1. to God that begat us by his Word, either by denying our conversion or else accounting it a false conversion; 2. towards the Church of England our mother, whom we desire to make a whore before Christ

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her husband, condemn her," &c. And this accusation he shutteth up with most bitter execrations against us as unworthy to breathe in the air.

For the thankfulness of our hearts unto the Lord our God for his unspeakable mercies, we leave it unto him that knows the heart, and for the manifestation of it unto men, we refer them to our entire, though weak, obedience to the whole revealed will of God, and ordinances of Christ Jesus, which we take to be the most acceptable sacrifice of thankfulness, which by man can be offered to the Lord.

And for our personal conversion in the Church of England we deny it not, but do, and always have so done, judge and profess it true there: and so was Luther's conversion true in the Church of Rome, else could not his separation from Rome have been of faith or accepted of God.

The same may be said of all the persons and churches in the world which have forsaken Rome.

Our third imagined sin is "spiritual uncharitableness" appearing in our deep censures upon all, at least, not inclinable unto us, condemning such as know not our way as blinded by the god of this world, the devil: such as see it, and yield not unto it, as worldlings, fearful, convinced in conscience, and going on in presumptuous sin: such as forsake it having formerly inclined unto it, apostates, and if they oppose it, godless persecutors, hunters after souls, such as shall certainly grow worse and worse, so as men shall say, God is revenged on them, &c.

1. If any one man have thus peremptorily defined either in word or writing, as Mr. B. witnesseth, it was that one man's fault, and is not to be imputed to the rest of us, more than Mr. B.'s most malicious and hateful accusations in this book, to all the ministers, and people in the Church of England, whereof I doubt not but thousands are ashamed, and to which they would be more unwilling to subscribe, than he, to the bishops' canons.

I, for mine own part, only exhort all men in all places, as they look to be approved at that day when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed, that they deal faithfully in the Lord's business, and take heed they neither forbear through partial prejudice or fleshly fear to inquire after

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the truth nor withhold it in unrighteousness, if they have found it; especially that they oppose it not, either in hatred or contempt of the persons professing it, or in flattery of the prelates and others of their train, whom most directly it impugneth. And for the rest whose hearts are upright before the Lord, mine hearty prayer is that according to their integrity their comforts may be, and that together with myself they may find mercy with the Lord for all those ignorances and infirmities wherewith the sons of men are compassed about in the days of their flesh.

And for you, Mr. B., where you "take God to witness, and the Lord to judge, that you do not oppose us of hatred or malice, nor of purpose to vex us, or to increase our afflictions," knowing as you do the terrors of the judgments of the Lord, I would seriously advise you, considering what you have spoken and threatened upon some personal provocations, to take heed you be not too bold with such deep protestations as these are, nor please yourself too much in them, because you find them sometimes profitable to serve your turn upon simple people.

2. The second point of our uncharitableness spiritual Mr. B. makes, "a most ungodly desire, as ever was heard of, to have the Word utterly extinguished amongst them, and Egyptian darkness to come over them, rather than it should be preached by such as do not favour our cause."

And, thereupon, he enters into a large commendation of preaching the gospel, as though we either despised it or undervalued it: and on the other side, into a most base extenuation of the constitution of the church, and of orderly proceeding in preaching, as things little or nothing regarded by the prophets, apostles, and other holy men of God.

For this man thus to accuse us, as if we desired that the light of the gospel might be put out in the land, and that darkness might cover all, is a most ungodly and impious slander, as ever was heard of; and in truth, one drop of that gall of bitterness, which the Christian reader, he confesseth in the preface, is like to find in his book.

We are glad and do rejoice for every spark of knowledge kindled in the heart of any person in the land, beseeching

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him, which is both the Author and Finisher of all grace, that the same may break out into a perfect flame. But, because we are taught, that the least evil may not be practised for the greatest good, Rom. iii. 8, nor a lie told for God, Job xiii. 9, who needs not man's sin for the accomplishment of his righteousness, we advise all men to take heed how they adventure to tread the maze of their own good meanings without warrant of God's Word, or to do that which is good in itself, without a lawful calling unto it, pleasing themselves in the uncertain events of things, which are only in the hands of God: and rather, to turn their feet from every evil way into the steps of righteousness, commending by faith the issues and events of things unto the Lord, whom alone they concern, and rather to choose neither "to buy nor sell, than to receive the character or mark of the beast, or the number of his name," Rev. xiii. 17, knowing that "he which worshippeth the beast and his image," and receives his character in his forehead or in his hand, shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, of the pure wine poured into the cup of his wrath, and shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the sight of the holy angels, and before the presence of the Lamb. Rev. xiv. 9, 10.

And for the concluding of this point, I would only demand of Mr. B. whether those godly ministers whom he brings in, page 130, to bear down all before them, be not of that company which rather choose to be silenced by the prelates, yea and so persuade others also, than to submit to their ceremonies and subscription. I think he will not deny it, if he be asked the question. And do these godly ministers there, or others in England, minded as I speak, desire that the Word may utterly be extinguished in the land, and that Egyptian darkness may come over all? Indeed the prelates so charge them as the cause of all papism and atheism in the land; but Mr. B., I know, judgeth otherwise of them: and so would he do of us, if the beam of malice did not blind his right eye, when he looked towards us.

Now for the preaching of the Word and gospel of salvation, as Mr. B. doth but worthily and according to the excellency of it, magnify and advance the same; so doth

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he most injuriously, and deceitfully oppose it unto the holy order, within which the Lord hath ranged it; and to the true constitution of the church, and other the ordinances thereof, with which it consorteth, necessarily, by the Lord's appointment, and so they make together a most heavenly harmony. And thus to set the ordinances of Christ at jar amongst themselves, and in the commendation of one principle to bury the rest as vile and unnecessary, is a most effectual delusion, and deep deceit, by which the mystery of iniquity is much advantaged in the false assemblies, and the hearts of the simple fast held in the snares of error and impiety.

The bishops and those of their sect do in their sermons and writings extol prayer. But to what end? That they may depress preaching, and oppress preachers, and so establish their service-saying priests in the ministry.

Mr. B. here, and so the forward sort commonly will magnify preaching: but as he, here, so they, ofttimes, with an evil eye to the right gathering, lawful government, and orderly administration of the holy things of and in the church. Well, the Lord sees this halting on both sides, and will avenge the quarrel of his very meanest ordinance and least commandment upon all these deceitful workers, Matt. v. 19. "Who is wise that he may understand these things, and prudent that he may take knowledge of them? for the ways of Jehovah are righteous, and the just shall walk in them, but the rebels shall fall in them." Hosea xiv. 9.

And, for the preaching of the gospel would Mr. B. but turn his eye a little upon himself, and his national church, he might find that every text brought by him for the advancement of preaching, is as a sworn evidence both against himself, and the church for which he pleads.

The more needful vision is, for which he quotes in the first place Prov. xxix. 18, "where vision is not, the people perish," or is made naked, the more desperate is the estate of the Church of England, wherein the greatest part of the parishes by far have dark midnight for vision: the more unlawful and ungodly is the ministry of that church, to which preaching is but an accident, and no way essential or necessary; the more accursed is the prelacy of the

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same church which for indifferent things and so not necessary, as themselves acknowledge, blind the eyes and stop the mouths of the best seers, and painfullest preachers in all places. And if the order which Christ hath left in his church be so vile in Mr. B.'s eyes in comparison of his unorderly preaching, what can he say for his lords, the bishops, which for the orders devised by themselves and by their forefathers of Rome, thrust out of so many churches the ordinance of preaching? A man would think Mr. B.'s zeal should find room enough at home and in his own church, and not thus pursue beyond the seas a poor company of despised and dispersed people.

But to the very point which Mr. B. drives at. There is not one scripture alleged by him which justifies the preaching of the gospel out of a true, much less in a false, constitution. They do all and every one of them, necessarily presuppose the same, howsoever he would separate the things which God hath joined together. Take one for example and that, such a one, as he makes a pillar in his building. It is written and so by him alleged, Psa. cxlvii. 19, 20, "He showed his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel: He hath not so dealt with every nation," &c.

"Here," saith Mr. B., "the Lord prefers his word before a constitution, as a testimony of his special love." But untruly. For, in this very place, the Lord prefers a constitution before his word, statutes, and judgments, as the cause why he gave them. For wherefore did the Lord show his word unto Jacob, his statutes and judgments unto Israel, but because of their constitution? that is, because Israel was the Lord's peculiar people separated from all other nations, and received by the Lord into covenant, as no other nation was. Lev. xxvi. 12, 14; Exod. xix. 5, 6; Deut. xxix. 10—12, &c.; with Rom. iii. 2, ix. 4; Acts ii. 39, iii. 25. How profanely soever this man doth debase and vilify the true constitution of the church, which he is like never to enjoy, as Esau did the birthright, wherewith the Lord never meant to honour him. Gen. xxv. 32, 33.

And amongst other debasements of the constitution of the church he affirmeth, page 55, that though "an orderly proceeding" ought to be had, yet that at no hand for want

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thereof preaching ought to be left off, and to this end, pages 53 and 54, he violently haleth into the same guilt with himself the brethren of the dispersion, Acts viii. 1, 4, 12, whom he chargeth in preaching the Word, "not to have stood upon every special point in entering so orderly unto the work."

But as their entrance was most orderly, for that being of a true constituted church at Jerusalem and dispersed by persecution, they published the gospel in every place where they came, as any member of the church may do, as grace is ministered, and occasion offered, so it is on the other side a Babylonish presumption for any man under any pretence whatsoever, to enterprise the preaching of the gospel or any other work disorderly. 1 Cor. xiv. 40.

The apostle, speaking especially of prophesying, expressly commands, that all things be done according to order: how then dare any petty pope, or proctor of Babylon dispense with or plead for disorder in this or any other ministration in the church?

3. The last and highest degree of our uncharitableness he reckons this, that "we are sorry and envious that the good things of God do prosper with them, and that the more religious men be, in their way, the more are we grieved," and to this end he pretends Mr. Barrowe's abusing and scoffing at the graces of God, and holy exercises in such persons.

As we hold ourselves bound to acknowledge all good things in all men and to honour them accordingly, 1 Pet. ii. 17, so must I here demand of Mr. B. as another hath done before me, what those good things are which so prosper; only the prelates prosper in the kingdom, who with their ceremonious horns and canons beat and batter down all that stands in their way. Of their prosperity against the truth we are sorry, but not envious, being taught not to envy the works of iniquity, considering what sudden, and certain desolation shall fall upon them. Psa. xxxvii. 9, 10. And, by the way, where Mr. B. takes it for granted, that the reformists are the most religious in the way of the Church of England, it is clean otherwise. The most absolute formalists, and most strict urgers of conformity are the most religious in the way of the Church of England:

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and as for the reformists their zeal, to speak as the truth is, and as shall hereafter more fully be manifested, is not in, nor for the way of the Church of England, but a by-path from it, which the Church of England, considered in the formal constitution of it, accounteth schism, and rebellion: but, rather, the same way in effect which we walk, if they were true to their own grounds, and durst practise what they have professed in their supplications, and admonitions to the Prince, and Parliament, and other their underhand passages, wherein they do plainly condemn the prelacy for antichristian, the service-book as superstitious, the mixture of all sorts of people as confused, and so of the rest. And this, Mr. B., justifieth the objections which you would so gladly prevent, page 57, made by your brethren in the faith, for so are the worst of them, the profane and secure worldlings, and atheists, that men painful and conscionable in their ministry and their lives, do breed and further, as you speak, Brownites and Brownism. For proof hereof, I will here insert a few things written and published both in former and latter times by such men, as I dare say Mr. B. reckons amongst the painful and conscionable ministers.

Their words are these:—

"We have an antichristian and popish ordering of ministers, strange from the Word of God, never heard of in the primitive church, but taken out of the pope's shop, to the destruction of God's kingdom."—*Second Admonition to the Parliament, by Thos. Cartwright.*

"The names and offices of archbishops, archdeacons, lord bishops, &c., are, together with their government, drawn out of the pope's shop, antichristian, devilish, and contrary to the Scriptures. Parsons, vicars, parish priests, stipendiaries, &c., be birds of the same feather."—*Ibid.*

"The callings of archbishops, bishops, with all such, be rather members and parts of the whore and strumpet of Rome, than of the pure virgin and spouse of the immaculate Lamb."—*Mr. Chadderton's Sermon upon Rom. xii.*

"The calling of bishops and archbishops, does only belong unto the kingdom of antichrist."—*Discovery of Dr. Bancroft's Slanders*, page 30.

"Our diocesan and provincial churches, using diocesan and provincial government and officers, are contrary to

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God's Word, and simply unlawful."—*Reasons, &c., for Reforming our Churches in England,* Ass. 1, *by Henry Jacob.*

"There is no true visible church of Christ, but a particular congregation only."—*Christian Offer.* Prop. 4.

"Every true visible church of Christ, or ordinary assembly of the faithful, hath, by Christ's ordinance, power in itself, immediately under Christ, to elect, to ordain, deprive, and depose their ministers, and to execute all other ecclesiastical censures."—*Ibid.* Prop. 5.

"The visible church of Christ, wheresoever it be, hath the power of binding and loosing annexed unto it, as our Saviour Christ teacheth, Matt. xviii."—*Discovery of Dr. Bancroft's Slanders, Preface.*

"We must needs say as followeth, that this book (viz. the Communion Book) is an unperfect book, culled and picked out of that popish dunghill, the mass-book; full of all abominations."—*Admonition to Parliament,* Treat. 2.

"Amongst us, the holy sacraments are communicated with the papists, the holy mysteries of God profaned, the Gentiles enter into the temple of God, the holy things are indifferently communicated with the clean and unclean, circumcised and uncircumcised."—*A Plain Declaration of Ecclesiastical Discipline,* page 172.

Now let the indifferent reader judge, whether these sayings, with many more of the like kind, do not most necessarily conclude, yea and naturally beget a separation from the government, ministry, worship, and communion of the Church of England; and whether these men, in thus writing, have not opened the door unto us, by which themselves enter not.

4. To the further charge of uncharitableness laid against us, as being glad when they contend amongst themselves, never praying for the peace and welfare of the ministry, &c., I do answer, that we rejoice for all peace in truth amongst all men; but for peace in iniquity, which is a wicked conspiracy and a fearful judgment of God, we rejoice not, we pray not. Let Mr. B. ask the godly ministers, with whose supply he backs his book, whether they rejoice in his and other men's peaceable subscription and conformity? or, whether they could not rather have wished they had contended against the same? Yea, let

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me ask Mr. B. himself, whether he rejoice in the peace of the representative Church of England, the Convocation House, and in their unanimous consent in framing and imposing their canons and constitutions? or, whether he would not rather clap his wings and crow for joy, if the two arch-prelates, with the rest of their horned clergy there, would oppose and cross one another? And let me ask him, yet further, for the welfare of which order of ministry he would have us pray? or whether he himself prayeth for the welfare of the bishops, except it be sometimes before their faces. And for us to pray for the inferior ministry and not for the prelacy, is to dally with God, and to bless the branch and not the root.

And in alleging, as you do, Acts xi. 20—24, to prove that holy men have rejoiced for the people receiving of the gospel, and not at their standing in a constitution, you do injuriously separate things to be conjoined. For the same persons that received the gospel, joined themselves in a constitution, or constituted church, as appeareth, verse 26. And it is expressly said, Acts ii. 41, that they that received the Word were added to the church, and being baptized they must needs be of a church, for baptism is not without, but within the church, and an ordinance given unto it.

And how profanely bold soever you, Mr. B., are to blaspheme the tabernacle of God which he hath pitched amongst men, or visible church framed according to the pattern given by a greater than Moses, yet is it good for us to consider what the Holy Ghost noteth, in the last verse of the forenamed chapter, that "the Lord added to the church from day to day such as should be saved." Neither can you possibly produce one example or other proof in the Scriptures, of one man teaching the gospel, but he was a member of a true church; nor receiving it, but he joined unto one. And for the man that cast out devils in Christ's name but followed him not, Mark ix. 39, he can no way help you for what purpose soever you allege him.

For first he was a member of a true constituted church, the church of the Jews, which was yet undissolved; second, he had no office, but a gift; third, his gift and calling to use it, were extraordinary and miraculous.

Now for our love towards you, wherein you blame us as

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defective, it is the same, in general, which we bear towards all men, and more special, according to the special bonds betwixt us and you, and towards many very great, both for the many good things we know to be in them, and under the hope also of their further progress.

And for our prayers, as it is true that we cannot pray for you as visible members of God's church, for God never gathered church of the visible and apparent members of the devil, as the greatest part of yours were and are: so is it unjustly insinuated against us that we pray no otherwise for you than for papists, atheists and the like. We pray for the perfecting of God's work in you, and that, as we think many of you his people in Babylon, so you may come out of her.

5. Our next brand of uncharitableness, is our accustomary excommunications, even for light offences in some, albeit others, obstinate, can be let pass. And to prove this, he quotes Mr. George Johnson, and Mr. White, the former an excommunicant himself, whom Mr. B. also, page 35 of his book, calls "a disgraceful libeller:" the other an ungodly apostate, whose accusations have been answered one by one. A fit evidence for such a plea and plaintiff.

But if Mr. B., knowing the fashions of the Church of England, had but once remembered the saying of the Lord Jesus, Matt. vii. 3—5, he would never have accused other churches of uncharitable and rash excommunications, which, if they be a mote in the Church of Amsterdam, are a beam in the Church of England, wherein there is more danger of excommunication to them that fear God, than to any other flagitious persons whomsoever.

Indeed no man can challenge Mr. B. and his church of Worksop, for any such heady and rash excommunications; they are very moderate this way, and can bear in communion with them any graceless person whomsoever till his dying day, and then commit full charitably the body of their deceased brother to the grave, with a devout prayer for his joyful resurrection: so charitable are they both to the living and the dead.

But the thing which most grieves Mr. B., and at which he hath greatest indignation, (sect. 3, page 62), is, that

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we will not hear his sermons, though he preach nothing but the true Word of God. And so he desires to hear of us, "where the hearing of the true Word of God only, preached, is sin, and forbidden by Christ, or the prophets or apostles." For answer hereof I would know first, whether Mr. B. speaking here and in many other places of the true Word of God, do mean, that God hath a true Word and a false Word, or rather betray not an accusing conscience, that they in England have not the Word truly taught, that is in a true office of ministry.

Now for the demand, referring the reader for more full satisfaction, to that which hath been published at large by others, I do answer, that as it was unlawful to communicate with Korah or with Uzziah, though they burnt true incense; or with Jeroboam's priests, though they offered true sacrifices, Numb. xvi.; 2 Chron. xxvi.; 1 Kings xii., so is it unlawful to communicate with a devised ministry, what truth soever is taught in it.

Secondly, The Lord hath promised no blessing to his Word, but in his own ordinance, though by his superabundant mercy he ofttimes vouchsafe that, which no man can challenge by any ordinary promise.

Thirdly, No man may partake in other men's sins, 1 Tim. v. 22; Rev. xviii. 4, but every ministry either devised or usurped is the sin of him which exerciseth it. And as no good subject would assist or communicate with any person, in the administration of civil justice to the king's subjects, no not though he administered the same never so equally and indifferently, except the same person had commission from the king so to do: so neither ought the subjects of the kingdom of Christ to partake with any person whomsoever in the dispensation of any spiritual thing, though in itself never so holy, without sufficient warrant and commission from the most absolute and sovereign king of his church, Christ Jesus.

And where Mr. B. speaks of hearing the true Word of God only preached, he intimates therein, that if we would hear him preach it would satisfy him well, and so teacheth us, with himself and others, to make a schism in the church in using one ordinance and not another.

It is all one, whether a man communicate with the

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minister in his pulpit or with the chancellor in his consistory, both of them minister by the same power of the bishop. The chancellor may judge justly, and who knows whether or no the minister will teach truly? And if he do not, but speak the vision of his own heart, what remedy hath the church or what can they that hear him do? May they rebuke him openly according to his sin, and so bring him to repentance? 1 Tim. v. 20, or must they not bear his errors, yea, his heresies also, during the pleasure of the bishops, even their lord, and his?

And would you, Mr. B., be content your people should hear a mass priest or Jesuit, though he professed as loud as you do, that he would teach the true Word of God? And think not scorn of the match, for you have the selfsame office with a mass priest though refined. If he be ordained by a bishop, though it be the Bishop of Rome, he may minister in any Church of England, by virtue of that ordination. And besides mass priests preach some, and those the main truths, and the ministers in England neither do nor dare preach all, no nor some which, it may be, the others do.

Is it not better then for the servants of the Lord Jesus to exercise and edify themselves, according to the model of grace received, though in weaker measure, than to be so simple as to come to your feasts, though you cry never so loud unto them, thinking that because your stolen waters are sweet, and your hidden bread pleasant, that they have no power to pass by, but must needs become your guests?

Lastly, Mr. B., even to make up the measure of his malice, as he formerly reproached us by the oppositions and dissensions which he hath heard of amongst us, so doth he here by the unity and love which himself hath seen in us, comparing it, page 64, to the love of familists and papists, and other wretched and graceless companions. So that belike, whether we love or hate, whether we agree or disagree, this man will be sure to find matter of reproach unto us, and of stumbling to himself, as the Jews did both from John's austerity, and from Christ's more sociable course of life. Matt. xi. 18, 19.

Our fourth sin is abusing the Word, of which all are guilty, by misalleging and wresting places of Scripture,

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&c., and this Mr. B. proves, because some have accused some of the principal of us with it.

If accusation be conviction, Mr. B. needs not speak of some or any other, he himself hath most mightily convinced us, for he hath most hatefully accused us of any man alive.

The fifth sin (supposed) is our "wilful persisting in our schism, lightly regarding reverend men's labours, and scornfully despising weaker means," &c.

It is well known that Mr. B., how earnestly soever he pleads with us for the contrary, doth himself as much neglect, save for his own purposes, the judgment of other men, as any other: neither is there one minister in the land, I am verily persuaded, with whom he suiteth; but a right Ishmael is he, less or more, having his hand against every man, and every man's against him.

Well, I deny our separation to be schism, as we take the word; much less do we persist wilfully in it. And for the judgment of other men, as we despise not the meanest, so neither do we pin our faith upon the sleeves of the most learned.

The other exceptions of shifting and evading the Scriptures, and of perverseness of spirit in conference, I pretermit, as being both frivolous and despiteful; only, something must be answered before we pass this point, to the charge laid upon us, page 68, touching "corruptions in the churches apostolical," and reformed. And first, "object to them," saith he, "the corruptions of the churches apostolical, and their answer is, either that we maintain our corruptions by the sins of other churches, or else they were in a true constitution."

And how can you with modesty reject this answer? You say "we misconstrue your intendment, which is that corruptions make not a false church." We grant it, except they be essential; but this is that we say, that, what church soever allegeth the corruptions of other churches, with a purpose to continue in the like themselves, which is your estate, that church maintains her corruptions by the sins of other churches. And for the second point, I do affirm, that, merely by virtue of a constitution, there may be a true church of God, though abounding, for the pre-

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sent, in sin and iniquity; and yet another assembly, not rightly constituted or gathered into covenant with God, no true church, though less impieties be to be found in it.

The prophet Jeremiah complains, Lam. iv. 6, that the iniquity of the daughter of his people, namely Jerusalem, was become greater than the sin of Sodom; and the prophet Ezekial affirms, Ezek. xvi. 46, 47, 51, 52, that Jerusalem was more corrupt by half than Sodom and Samaria. And yet was Jerusalem the true church of God, which neither Samaria nor Sodom were; no, nor yet any other place in the world, where not half the wickedness was wrought that was to be found in the better of them. This point I will further exemplify by a similitude. A woman free and separated from all other men, and joined in civil covenant to a man, is his wife, yea though she prove very stubborn and disobedient, yea and dishonest also, till the bill of divorcement be given her; but another woman, the wife of another man, or not contracted to that man, is not his wife, nor can be so reputed, though she be never so obedient and buxom unto him; so the Church of England, till it be separated and free from the world, and prince of the world that reigneth in it, and so from Antichrist, his eldest son, in his hierarchy, priesthood, and other ordinances, and be taken into covenant with the Lord, cannot possibly be the true church of God, or wife of Christ; no, not though the good things in it were many more than they are. Which we do not allege, as is craftily insinuated against us, to justify any man's continuance in a church full of wickedness; but to prove that the constitution of the church, that is the collection and combination of saints, as matter in and into covenant with God as the form, is that which gives true being unto a church, and nothing else, how vilely soever men judge or speak of it.

And for corruptions in the apostolical churches, it is true the apostles mentioned them, but always with utter dislike, severe reproof, and strait charge of reforming them. Rom. xvi. 17; 1 Cor. v. 1, 6, 7, 11—13; 1 Thess. v. 14; 2 Thess. iii. 6; 1 Tim. vi. 5; Rev. ii. 14—16, 20.

But how do these things concern you? Though Paul, and all the apostles of Christ with him, yea though Christ himself from heaven should admonish any of your

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churches to put away from among themselves any person, though never so heretical or flagitious, you could not do it, neither could you reform any abomination otherwhere, though the same be as conspicuous as the leprosy of Uzziah, which brake forth in his forehead, 2 Chron. xxvi. 20. And this want of the power of the Lord Jesus for reformation, which another man would think were an intolerable slavery, Mr. B., page 68, turns to good advantage, and thinks himself and his church half excused of all the evils which are amongst them, because they want power to use the remedy; thus pleading for a privilege the mark of the beast, from which the servants of God ought to abhor, herein being passing witty, above other men, in making an advantage of that evil, which the most have enough to do to excuse.

And for true churches not using aright the power they have for reformation, they are like true bodies which through some obstructions, or stoppings for a time cannot void things noxious, and hurtful till there be a remedy: but the church without this power is as a monstrous body wanting the faculties and instruments of evacuation and expulsion of excrements, or other noisome things, and therefore is never appointed of God to live, but devoted to death and destruction.

Of the reformed churches and our carriage towards them I have spoken elsewhere;* and for your Turkish argument in the margin, wherein you incense the magistrate against us, as otherwise incorrigible, it well becomes the rest of your book, joining violence to slander. But are you yourself wholly conformable, Mr. B.? If not, why do you incense the magistrate against us, being yourself obnoxious to his displeasure? Or do you not hope to escape persecution yourself by persecuting us? This is too ordinary a practice amongst you. But the Lord seeth your halting, and rewardeth you in your bosoms, as you have served us. And when you and others, more forward than you, do consider and feel in what hatred you are with the king and state, methinks your hearts should smite you, as the hearts of Joseph's brethren did them in their trouble, for their barbarous cruelties towards him. Gen. xlii.

Vide pp. 43, 44, *supra*.

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Our sixth sin, by retail Mr. B. makes our railing and scoffing, and, in particular, H. Barrowe's blasphemies, &c., whose repentance he would have us publish to the world.

If I should answerably require of you the publication of the repentance of your clergy, not only for the cruel speakings, but even for the wicked deeds, which ungodlily they have committed against Christ, in his servants and ordinances, it were an hard tax put upon you. Yea to spare you for other men, do you but publish your own repentance for the same sins, wherein you are deeply set, and without doubt your godly example shall provoke many to the like.

And for Mr. Barrowe, as I say with Mr. Ainsworth, that I will not justify all the words of another man nor yet mine own, so say I also with Mr. Smyth, that because I know not by what particular motion of the Spirit he was guided to write in those phrases, I dare not censure him as you do: especially considering with what fiery zeal the Lord hath furnished such his servants at all times, as he hath stirred up for special reformation. Let the example of Luther alone suffice, whom into what terms his zeal carried, his writings testify. And yet both in him, and in Mr. Barrowe there might be, with true spiritual zeal, fleshly indignation mingled.

And though this, in general, might be sufficient, yet for the stopping of your mouth, Mr. B., and for the satisfying of others, I will descend a little to the very particulars, which you have culled out against Mr. Barrowe as most odious.*

First, then, you fault him, that he calls your bishops antichristian proud prelates, and the tail of the beast, &c.

And what are they but antichristian, if their office be against Christ, and his ordinances in the visible church? And what else do all the reformed churches abroad and

* A Brief Discovery of the False Church. Ezekiel xvi. 44. As the Mother such the Daughter is. Printed in 1590.

Mr. Barrowe published various others treatises and pamphlets, chiefly in vindication of this work, and in opposition to "George Giffard, Minister of God's Word," who attacked the "Brownists" and Barrowe in particular.

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reformists at home judge, speak, and write of them? And what thought you, Mr. B., otherwise of them, when even since you dealt against this cause of separation, you affirmed before many witnesses, that there was not a place in the New Testament against Antichrist, but you could apply it against them?

And because you are come to this height of boldness and depth of dissembling, I will here insert briefly, certain reasons which I received from yourself in writing, to prove the bishops antichristian, and that word for word as I have reserved them by me to this day.

"1. The fruits of the hierarchy are contrary to Christ.

"2. It forbids many good means of religion, as prophesying, &c.

"3. It keeps in and nourisheth offenders against painful labourers.

"4. It excommunicates the godly, yea for a word, and that *ipso facto*.

"5. It is lordly and tyrannous, contrary to 1 Pet. v. 1—3; Luke xxii. 25.

"6. It rules by popish laws and by the power of man, which are carnal weapons.

"7. It remits the offender for money, though he repent not.

"8. It establisheth an universal bishop as well as a diocesan, or provincial bishop."

And as I remember at the same time you brought forth Dr. Downame in his first book proving the pope Antichrist, chap. 4, affirming, that the hierarch in the Romish Church was antichristian, whereof I am sure the bishop's office is a part.

These reasons I thought good to set down not because they are all, or some of them of the best, that can be brought, but because they are yours, which, notwithstanding, I am persuaded neither you nor any other can satisfy.

And if Mr. B. himself thus write and speak in private, why blames he us for our public testimony?

Now if the bishops be antichristian and so the spirit of devils, Rev. xvi. 14, why might not Mr. Barrowe affirm their ministry and ministration to be of and by the devil? and what are they but either the tail, or some other limb of the beast?

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And for their excommunications by name, it is evident by this they are not of God, for that the most religious in the kingdom make least account of them.

For their Luciferian pride, whereof Mr. Barrowe accuseth them, it is apparent they burden the earth, and threaten the heavens with it; for their hateful simony, both in giving and receiving, they are so notorious, as the best service Mr. B. can do them in this case is, to turn men's thoughts from those evils which every eye sees, and every heart abhors.

Touching the Holy Ghost, the bishop gives in his blasphemous imitation of Christ, John xx. 22, except contrary to the rule in nature, *nihil dat quod non habet*, he can give that he hath not, it is not very likely he should give the Holy Ghost: why then might not Mr. Barrowe call it an unholy Ghost?

And for the Bible in the bishop's hands which he gives his priests in ordination, Mr. Barrowe calls it "the libel," not in contempt of the book, but in reproof of the ceremony, and that justly, since the Lord never appointed the Scriptures for any such use, nor any such ceremony in ordination of the ministers. Christ, and the apostles, would have such ministers ordained as have the Bibles in their hearts: the bishops of England to supply this want, give it into the hands of their priests, which they think sufficient, though, in truth, the most of them are more used to handle a pair of cards upon an ale-bench, than the Holy Bible.

Your patrons, Mr. Barrowe calls great Baals and lord-patrons; and justly, in respect of that lordly power they use in obtruding their clerks upon the parish assemblies: your ministers, yea all and every one of them priests, which is their proper name given them both in your book of ordination, and common prayer: your deacons, half priests according to the nature of their office, betwixt which and the deacon's office in the New Testament, Acts vi. 1—4, there is no consimilitude.

For the other more harsh terms, wherewith he entertains such persons and things in the church as carry with them most appearance of holiness, they are to be interpreted according to his meaning, and a distinction used by Mr. B., in another place, page 79, is hereto be applied. Which is

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that Mr. Barrowe speaks not of these persons, and things, simply, but in a respect, and so considered, and so no one term given by Mr. Barrowe to my knowledge, but may, at the least, be tolerated.

The ministers, as they receive the wages of unrighteousness, or counsel to spiritual fornication, are Balaamites; in respect of their office, vowed to destruction, Canaanites; as they plead for confusion, Babylonish divines; as they endeavour to stay God's people in Egypt, spiritually so called, Egyptian enchanters; as they are members of the hierarchy, limbs of the devil, by virtue whereof he bears great sway, as the reformers amongst you have expressly testified.*

And for your very divine exercises of prayer, preaching, sacraments, and singing of psalms, howsoever they be good and holy in themselves, or at least have much good in them, yet in respect of the unhallowed communion, forged ministry, and superstitious order wherein these and all other things with you are ministered and exercised, they are liable to the heaviest censure Mr. Barrowe hath put upon them.

And for the most forward preachers in the kingdom, considering their unsound and broken courses in denying that, in deed and practice, which in word and writing they profess to be the revealed will of God, and inviolable testament of Christ, binding his church for ever; yea, and practising the contrary in the face of the sun, committing two evils, forsaking the Lord, the fountain of living water, to dig themselves broken pits which will hold no water; yea, not only refusing themselves to enter into the kingdom of God, the church, but also hindering them that would, and persecuting them that do; and, lastly, considering them in their unconscionable defence for their own standings and practices, as that only the godly in the parish are of the church with them: that they hold and use their ministry by the acceptation of the people, and not by the bishops; that they obey the bishops in their citations, suspensions, excommunications and absolutions, as they are civil magistrates, and the like, they do deserve a sharper medicine, than happily they are willing to endure.

* Preface to the Discovery of Dr. Bancroft's Slanders.

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Yea, the very personal graces of knowledge, zeal, patience, and the like manifested in many, both ministers and people, are most unjustly perverted, and misused to the obduration and hardening both of the persons themselves, and others in most deceivable ways, wherein the deepest mystery of iniquity, and most effectual delusion of Satan that can be, worketh, as is by Mr. Barrowe and others clearly discovered.

But that Mr. Barrowe should say, that the preaching of God's Word, and the Spirit's effectual working should make men the children of hell and twofold worse than before, is a great slander, and could not possibly enter into his or other godly man's heart.

And so I leave these, and the like more unsavoury-seeming speeches of Mr. Barrowe to the wise and Christian reader's charitable interpretation.

The last rank of Mr. B.'s reasons followeth, which respect the matter of our separation, by him called schism, which how material they are shall appear in their place.

First Error.

Our first error according to his reckoning is:

"They hold that the constitution of our church is a false constitution."

And let us see how strongly your answer forces us from this our hold.

1. Arg. "They cannot prove this simply by any plain doctrine of Scripture, and that which they would prove is but only respectively," and so may anything, and their church also be condemned.

2. Arg. "It is against the evidence of the Scriptures which maketh the Word, external profession, and sacraments the visible constitution," &c.

That you then affirm in the first place, is, that we cannot prove this simply by any plain doctrine, wherein you do half confess that we do it by just consequence, though not by plain doctrine, and wholly, that respectively, and so and so considered, as you speak, your constitution is false. And thus, you say, anything may be condemned.

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But first, it is not true that anything may be condemned after this sort. The constitution of the church apostolic could, in no consideration, be condemned, neither could ours, to our knowledge being according to that pattern, how weakly soever we walk in it.

Secondly, The constitution even of Rome, as now it stands, is not simply false, but only in this and that respect. So far as it separates from heathenish idolatry and idolators unto the true God, and retains any truths of God and remainders of Christ's testament, so far it is not false, or feigned, and yet is her present constitution false, and she incapable of the Lord's covenant.

To come nearer the matter. The constitution of the church is the orderly collection and conjunction of the saints into and in the covenant of the New Testament: wherein the saints, are the matter; the covenant, the form, from which two concurring, the church ariseth, and is by them constituted. Now for the Word, it is an outward instrument preparing and preserving the matter, but no more the constitution of the church, than the axe is the constitution or frame of the house: and, for external profession, it manifests the fitness of the matter for the form, and by it the saints enter covenant; which covenant also the sacraments confirm as seals annexed to that end.

And where Mr. B. affirmeth, we cannot prove their church constitution false by any plain doctrine of Scripture, we will consider the scriptures he himself allegeth, and the doctrine of them, which, as so many touchstones, do discover the counterfeit constitution of the same.

The Word, saith he, is the constitution of the church: his meaning is, or should be at the least, that the Word is the ordinary outward means for the collecting, and constituting of the church of God. I grant it. But how considered? Not the Word in men's Bibles alone, for then all the heretics in the world are true Christians, nor yet the Word preached simply, for Paul preached the word to the scoffing Athenians, Acts xvii. 22, 23—32, and to the blasphemous Jews, Acts xix. 8, 9, yet I think he will not say, that either the one or the other, were churches truly constituted. How then? The Word published, understood, believed, and obeyed outwardly at the least, as the spiritual

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sword, or axe, hewing the stones in the rock, and trees in the forest, and preparing them to be the Lord's spiritual house. 1 Pet. ii. 5. And thus much the very places produced by Mr. B. like Goliath's sword drawn out to cut off his own head, do evidently declare.

Matt. xxviii. 19, which is the first place, shows that such as by preaching of the Word were made disciples, for so much the word *μαθητεύσατε* importeth, were to be gathered into the church and baptized. Mark xvi. 15, shows the same, especially if you add verse 16, inferring that men by preaching must believe, and so believe, as they have the promise of salvation, which I note the rather to show the vanity of that verbal profession in a profane conversation, which elsewhere Mr. B. makes so much of.

The places, 2 Cor. v. 19, and xi. 2, cited by you do prove, that the Word of reconciliation and ministry of the gospel believed and obeyed to the forgiveness of sins and to the preparation and sanctification of the church to Christ, is the means of gathering and building up the same, to which that of Job xxxiii. 23, 24 consorteth.

The two places, Acts ii. 14, 37, 38, 41, xvi. 32—34, are of the same nature with the former, and do prove that sundry of the Jews at Jerusalem, by Peter's preaching, and that the jailor's household at Philippi, by Paul's preaching, were brought to repentance, and faith in Christ, and so added to the church.

But what will be the conclusion of all these premises?

The proposition is this. The true apostolic churches having a true constitution, were gathered and constituted of such men and women, as by the preaching of the gospel were made disciples, had faith and repentance wrought in them to the obtaining of the forgiveness of sins, and promise of life eternal, and to sanctification and obedience.

Now though my logic be not much better than yours, Mr. B., yet since my cause is, I will help you with an assumption, or second proposition.

But the Church of England was not so gathered after popery, but, on the contrary, without preaching of the gospel, and of men and women for the most part ignorant, faithless, impenitent, disobedient, to whom no promise of the forgiveness of sins, and life eternal appertains: where-

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upon the conclusion necessarily followeth, that the constitution of the Church of England is not true or apostolic, but false, counterfeit, and apostatical.

Secondly, The Scriptures, saith Mr. B., make external profession the visible constitution of the church. His meaning must be, that profession of faith is required of such persons of years before they be admitted into the visible church. Which truth the place cited by him, Acts viii. 12, 37, 38, doth justify, to which one place many others may be added for the same purpose, as Acts x. 46, xvi. 14, and xviii. 8.

But what is the church of Worksop* better for this? what profession of faith did the particular members make, when, at the first, of an antichristian synagogue, as in popery it was, it became or was constituted a true Christian church? was not the house built, at the first, as it is at this day repaired? Let a man but hire a house within the precincts of your parish, and he is a joined member in your church, *ipso facto*, though he cannot manifest the least kernel of faith, or repentance, yea though he profess himself an atheist, heretic, sorcerer, blasphemer, or that which is worse, if worse can be. All you do, is to use the wooden dagger Mr. Barrowe tells you of, to suspend him from the Lord's Supper, and it may be to get him excommunicated by the official, if he have neither friends nor money. And this very excommunication shows him to have been a member of you, for only a brother is to be excommunicated, Matt. xviii. 15—17, and only he that was within, may be cast out, 1 Cor. v. 12, 13.

And here, as before, I will help to form your argument.

The members of the Apostolic Church, which were truly constituted, were admitted by their personal profession of faith, and confession of sin, Matt. iii. 6; Acts viii. 37, 38, x. 46, xvi. 14, xviii. 8, xix. 18.

But the members of the English assemblies neither were nor are so admitted, but according to the parish perambulation, whatsoever impiety they profess.

Therefore their constitution is proved false, by the evidence brought to justify it.

* The parish church of Worksop, Notts, of which Mr. Bernard was the incumbent.

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Lastly, for the sacraments, as they are not the constitution of the church, but do necessarily presuppose a church constituted, unto which they are committed as the oracles and ordinances of God unto Israel, Acts vii. 38; Rom. ix. 4, so is not the Church of England the Israel of God, the seed of Abraham, a peculiar people unto the Lord, but a mingled seed, as Ezra ix. 1, 2, incapable of the sacraments, the seals of the covenant of grace. And the places Mr. B. brings forth are so far from justifying the constitution of the Church of England by the sacraments, as they do, most notably, evince the profanation of the sacraments by the church.

The two places are Matt. xxviii. 19; 1 Cor. x. 16. In the former, the Lord Jesus sends his apostles first to teach, or make men disciples, and then to baptize them, including the children in the parents, according to the covenant made with Abraham, into which the Gentiles were in their time to be gathered, Rom. ii. 17; Eph. ii. 1, 2, 13, 14, and iii. 6. But, on the contrary, the Lord Bishops in England, having found a readier way, send out their parish priests to baptize all before them, that are born in their parishes, whether their parents be taught or untaught, the disciples of Christ or of Antichrist, and the devil, not passing by the children of recusant papists and others, refusing all communion with them whose children they use to baptize by force, and against the will of their parents, as I could prove, if need were, by sundry instances. And is not here an orderly constitution, and a church truly gathered by the sacrament of baptism?

Now 1 Cor. x. 16, the apostle teacheth, that the bread and wine in the Supper are the communion of the body and blood of Christ, that is, effectual pledges of our conjunction, and incorporation with Christ, and one with another: and in the 17th verse that all, which eat of one bread, or one loaf, are one mystical body. This place alone, if Mr. B. and his fellow ministers would seriously consider and set themselves faithfully to observe, they would rather offer their own bodies to be torn in pieces by wild beasts, than the holy mysteries of Christ's body to be profaned, as they are.

And here, as formerly, I will help the arguments raised from the Scriptures produced by Mr. B. and some other of the same kind into form thus:

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The sacrament of baptism is to be administered by Christ's appointment, and the apostles' example only to such as are, viz. externally and so far as men can judge, taught and made disciples, Matt. xxviii. 19, do receive the word gladly, Acts ii. 41, believe and so profess, chap. viii. 12, 13, 37, have received the Holy Ghost, chap. x. 47, and to their seed, Acts ii. 39; 1 Cor. vii. 14.

But baptism in England is ministered by a far larger commission than Christ's: though there be in the parents, neither appearance of faith nor holiness, if instead of them they can procure godfathers and godmothers to carry the children to the font, yea, will they, nill they, the parish priest hath commission to make them Christian souls, every mother's child of them, born within his parish precincts. And, therefore, the baptism in England is not Christ's baptism in the administration of it.

For the Lord's Supper the apostle saith, 1 Cor. x. 16, that the bread and wine sanctified to that purpose, is the communion, that is, an effectual symbol or pledge of that communion which the receivers have with Christ. Whereupon I do turn the point of this scripture into the bowels of the Church of England thus:

That which joins such men in communion with Christ, as by his express word he excludes from all communion with him, that is so far from being the true constitution of the church, as it shows both an unholy confusion in the church and a violent profanation of the ordinance by it.

But the Supper, as it is ministered in the parish assemblies, as they were at the first, and still are clapped together, joins them with Christ with whom he expressly disclaims all communion and fellowship, as their practice compared with these scriptures doth make manifest to all men. 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15; 1 John i. 6.

Ergo.

So that baptism and the Lord's Supper are amongst you, Mr. B., and in your hands and handling, but as the holy vessels of the temple in Babylon, and there, together with the Lord's people, detained by fraud and violence.

Second Error.

Our second supposed error is thus laid down:

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"They hold our constitution a real idol, and so us idolaters."

If the constitution of your church be false and forged, like the month which Jeroboam forged in his own heart, 1 Kings xii. 33, as hath been formerly proved in part, and shall be more fully, in the traversing of the eighth error, then it is an idol; if an idol, a real idol; for it is not merely mental, or notional, but that which hath being and existence, without the mind or understanding.

And where Mr. B. affirms this to be contrary to the course of Holy Scriptures, never taking idol in this sense, because neither he nor Marlorat finds the word idol so used, he must know it is as impossible for either him, or Marlorat, or any other man to enumerate or reckon up all the idols whereof the Scriptures speak, though not in express terms, yet by just consequence and proportion, as to number all the creatures in heaven and in earth, yea all the works of man's hands, yea all the thoughts of their hearts, for all these may and do in some abuse become idols.

And that we may better discern whether there be a like truth and boldness in this assertion, "that the Scriptures never take idol in this sense," let us consider and compare together a few places.

The Lord commanded Moses, Exod. xxv., xxvi., and xxvii., to make the tabernacle and sanctuary of the Lord for the place of his dwelling and worship, and to this end did appoint both the matter and form of the whole work, even to the least pin: and if Moses had framed it, either of other matter, or of the same matter after another fashion, had not this forgery and device for the worship of God been a real, sensible, and palpable idol, a sin against the second commandment which forbids nothing but idolatry? It cannot be denied. Hence it followeth that the constitution or frame of the tabernacle or temple of the new testament, which is the visible church, 2 Cor. vi. 16, if it be other, either in matter or form, as yours is in both, is a real and substantial idol. Secondly, Antichristianism is idolatry, and is in that respect called Babylon, Sodom, and Egypt, spiritually, Rev. xi. 8, and xiv. 8, so Antichristians are said to worship the beast, chap. xiv, 9: now a devised constitution, frame and fabric of the church, is a part of Anti-

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christianism, and of the apostacy of Antichrist, and, therefore, a real idol: and as Mr. Smyth truly affirmeth, a greater idol than either the antichristian ministry or worship. As "the temple which sanctifieth the gold, is greater than the gold, and the altar which sanctifieth the offering, greater than the offering," Matt. xxiii. 17, 19, so the temple of the new testament, the church or people of God, by whose faith all the ordinances of the church are sanctified, is greater than the ministry worship or any other ordinance: and so, on the contrary, being idolatrous, a greater idol than they. And lastly, the church being the end of the ordinances, Mark ii. 27, 28, is more excellent than they being true, and being false a more detestable idol than any of them,

Lastly, Neither your bolstering out of a false constitution as a new sin shall excuse you for not submitting unto a true, nor your profane scoffing at a true constitution, as at the Diana of the Ephesians, discourage us from rejoicing in our portion.

It is with you, in this case, as it was sometimes with Rehum and Shimshai, who making a show as though they would have built the temple with Zerubbabel; but not being the men to whom this work appertained, laboured afterwards to hinder and discourage him, and the Jews with him whom it did concern. Ezra iv. 1, 2, 3, 8, 9.

Once you know, Mr. B., you did separate from the rest an hundred voluntary professors into covenant with the Lord, sealed up with the Lord's Supper, to forsake all known sin, to hear no wicked or dumb ministers, and the like, which covenant long since you have dissolved, not shaming to affirm you did it only in policy to keep your people from Mr. Smyth. Well, Mr. B., be not deceived, God is not mocked, neither will he hold them guiltless that so take his name in vain, but as you have sown so shall you reap.

To conclude, you would have no man blame you for your contumelies against the planting of the Lord's vineyard, Isa. v. 7, the building of God's house, 1 Tim. iii. 15; the composition of Christ's body, the constitution of his church, Eph. ii. 22. And wherefore? "because Mr. Robinson held

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as much before into separation." And if it were so, should mine iniquities excuse yours? But it is most untrue you affirm. There never entered into my heart a thought, nor passed a word out of my mouth so contumelious against the true and orderly constitution of Christ's church: though I have, and that worthily, disliked, as I still do, that hard and rash censure passed by some upon the persons of such as of whom the Lord, by the evident work of his Spirit, gives a better testimony.

And for the point in hand, I am persuaded and so profess before all men, that I see not by the revealed will of God in his Word, how to judge otherwise of any ordinance of the church, or exercise of communion out of a true constituted church, than of the sacrifices out of the tabernacle or temple, within whose circle they were concluded by the Word of God.

Third Error.

The third error is thus set down:

"That such as are not of a particular constituted church, to wit such a one as theirs is, are no subjects of Christ's kingdom."

And since our church is a particular congregation separated from Antichristianism, into covenant with God by voluntary submission unto the gospel, we do avow it for truth that "such as are not of a particular" &c.

For since the visible church, is the visible or external kingdom of Christ, Matt. xxi. 43; John x. 16; 1 Cor. xv. 24; which he as Mediator collecteth, protecteth, and administereth, he, that is not a member of the visible church, is not in this regard a subject of Christ's kingdom. Neither are your exceptions against this doctrine of any force.

The Scripture, you say in the first place, never sets forth any of God's people by this mark. Yes that it doth, and that ofttimes without any other mark.

How oft doth Moses, and the other prophets with him, entreat the Lord to spare Israel when they sinned, for their constitution, that is, for the covenant of his mercy into which he had admitted them, with their forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob!

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The Lord protesteth, Isa. i., that Israel did rebel against him, that they did not understand, but were a most sinful nation, yea as Sodom and Gomorrah, and yet he calls them children and his people, ver. 1—4, 10, yea passing Sodom in iniquity, and yet the daughter of his people, and daughter of Zion, Lam. iv. 6, 22. And what do these and infinite other the like places, but conclude, that where there was little or nothing else to be seen, the Lord marked out his people by this, that he had established them a people unto himself by covenant, Deut. xxix. 12, 13, which though they, for their part, had broken by their iniquities, yet was for the present on his part undissolved?

And where is it granted by Mr. B. that the godly ought to join with the visible church if possibly they can, why doth he blame us which intend no further? If men truly desire it, but cannot possibly accomplish it, the Lord in this, as in other cases, accepts the will for the deed.

And so I answer your third exception, in order, touching the martyrs in Queen Mary's days and other godly persons there named, that some of them were members of the true visible church actually, others actually separated from the false church, and in will, which God accepteth, joineth with the true church, and others walking faithfully according to their knowledge, whether living or dead, are and were God's people, though in Babylon.

Your second exception is, certain scriptures to which, you say, this doctrine is contrary. The first is Gal. iii. 7, 9. And how to this?

They that are of the faith of Abraham separate themselves, by faith, from the world into covenant with the Lord, as Abraham did. Gen. xii. 1—3; Heb. xi. 8.

To the second place, which is 1 John iii. 14, I do answer that John speaks of such as were of the true visible church; neither can any other, according to the true visibility and manifestation of the love, which the Lord requireth, love his brother, which is not of a true visible church.

He that doth not admonish his brother, if he offend, after that order and in those degrees, which the Word prescribeth, doth not love his brother. Lev. xix. 17.

But only, he that is of a true visible church and that furnished with the power of Christ, the keys of the king-

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dom for the censures, can admonish his brother in that order and those degrees, which the Word prescribeth. Matt. xviii. 15—17. And so this scripture, Mr. B. overthrows both your opinion, and standing.

The third scripture is 1 Cor. i. 1.

Paul writes there only to visible churches, to the church of Corinth primarily, and so, by proportion, to all other visible churches in the world, for to them alone the censures, sacraments, prophesying, and other matters there handled, do appertain. 1 Cor. v. 1—5; xi. 20; and xiv. 4, 5.

The brother spoken of in the fourth and last place, which is 2 Thess. iii. 15, was a member of the visible church and subject of Christ's kingdom, though walking inordinately in his calling, as appeareth, ver. 11, and, therefore, to be discountenanced and made ashamed by the church, that he might the more faithfully apply himself to his business.

These scriptures, then, do none of them wash this mark from off God's people, but some of them, if not all, print it far more deeply upon them.

Lastly, you ask whether Christ's kingdom be not spiritual, and invisible also? John xviii. 36, x. 16.

No man will deny it, though the places you allege do not so necessary prove it. But as Christ's kingdom is spiritual and invisible also, so is it spiritual and visible also. The man which hath received the Spirit, 1 Cor. ii. 15, is spiritual, and not the soul only. So external things may be spiritual and are in their relation and use, and you err if you think otherwise. The word, sacraments, and other ordinances of the church are spiritual, Rom. i. 11, xv. 27; 1 Cor. x. 3, 4; Rom. xii. 1; Heb. xiii. 15; 1 Peter ii. 5; yea all the sacrifices of the faithful are spiritual, and more specially, as the Lord Jesus is the priest both of the soul and body and hath paid a price for both, 1 Cor. vi. 20; so is he also the king both of soul and body, and sways the sceptre of his kingdom, not only internally by his Spirit in the soul, but externally and visibly also by this Word in the outward man, guiding the same by his lawful officers deputed thereunto.

But what is the cause why Mr. B. should move this question?

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Is it not for that himself and his church, not having Christ to rule over them by his laws, but other kings and lords by their canons, he would insinuate that Christ exerciseth none external regimen over his church, nor is the king over the bodies of his subjects at all, thus rather labouring to abolish that part of Christ's kingdom, than to submit to it? But as our principal care at all times must be, to have the throne of our Lord Jesus erected in our hearts, that he may reign there, so that we may give him his own entire, and that, which he hath so dearly bought, we must rank our bodies also under the regimen he hath established for the well ordering and preservation of his kingdom for ever both in soul and body, and not like Nicodemites,* or Familists† presume, to submit the outward man we care not to whom, or what.

Fourth Error.

Our fourth supposed error is:

"That all not in their way are without, and do apply against us 1 Cor. v. 12; Eph. ii. 12."

And since the way is one, as Christ is one, and we assured, that our way is that way of Christ, we doubt not to affirm, that all not in our way are without, in the present respect; provided always that we do judge that other churches may be and are in our way, and we in theirs, and both they and we in Christ's, though there be betwixt them and us sundry differences both in judgment and practice. And that we do fitly apply against you the scriptures above-named, I do thus manifest.

The apostle, 1 Cor. v., reproves the church for tolerating amongst them the incestuous person uncensured, charging them to use the power of the Lord Jesus given unto them, for that purpose, and that, as upon him for the present, so upon other notorious offenders at other times. Now, lest they should mistake his meaning, he shows how far this his advertisement extends, viz.: to such offenders as were in the church, and to all, and only them. And this limitation of the power of Christ to the proper object, he sets

* *Nicodemites.*—Parties holding the principles of the Reformation, but fearing to abandon their connexion with the Romish Church.

Familists.—Adherents of the "Family of Love."—Vide vol. i. p. 390. Note.

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down in this 12th verse, affirmatively, to them that are within, and negatively, to them that are without. From this place then I do thus reason.

They that are within, are subject to the power of excommunication by the church gathered together in the name of Christ; they, without, not.

But you, Mr. B. and so of the rest, are not subject to the judgment of the church thus gathered together, but to the Archbishop of York, who is not the church of Worksop.

Therefore, you are not within but without, in the apostle's meaning.

The second place we apply against you is, Eph. ii. 12, whence I reason thus:—

They that are aliens and strangers from the commonwealth of Israel, are without.

But such are you, and your whole parish.

Ergo.

The first proposition is the apostle's words: for to be without Christ, as there he speaks, and to be a stranger from the commonwealth of Israel, is all one.

The second proposition is thus confirmed:

The commonwealth of Israel was a religious policy, consisting of a peculiar people, of whom every one was, by the Word of God, separated into the covenant of his mercy, Deut. xxix. 10—13: Nehem. x. 1, 28, 29.

But to affirm that every person in the Church of England, or in any parish church, is admitted by the Lord into the new covenant or testament, is both against the express word of God, Heb. viii. 8—12, and his own conscience, I am persuaded, that affirmed it.

And thus, so long as you keep your standing, you must be content to stand without, in the meaning of the apostle in the places forenamed, neither can you writhe in yourself, or corrupt these places to get in by them, though you give sundry attempts, as

"1. These places are meant of such as never made so much as an outward profession of Christ Jesus at all."

What better are men for professing God in word, when in deed they deny him?

They are never a whit the less, but the more abominable. Tit. i. 16. And might not any papist or other heretic

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make this exception? For they make a kind of profession of Christ Jesus. And when you, Mr. B., in your pulpit thunder the judgments of God, out of the prophets and apostles against atheists, papists, blasphemers, proud and cruel persecutors, might not a man serve you, as you do us, and tell you that the most of the threatenings you denounce were directed against the heathen, which did not so much as make an outward profession of Christ?

Lastly, The Holy Ghost terming Antichristianism, Babylon, Sodom, Egypt, spiritually teacheth us to apply against it, spiritually, what the prophets have, civilly, spoken against them.

"2. They cannot prove us without, by the scripture, expounding this phrase, without, by the Scriptures, laying aside the forgeries of their own brains."

The cause is plain, that whosoever is not a free denizen of the commonwealth of Israel, and under the judgment of the church, is without, and there must stand by God's appointment. And that this is your estate, is as plain. And both these we have proved by the Scriptures, without forgeries of our own brain; all the brains you have will find no forgeries in our proofs.

"3. God Almighty hath witnessed that we are his people."

"1. By giving us his word, Psalm cxlvii. 19, 20, and sacraments."

This scripture proves, that God gave his word to Jacob, and statutes to Israel; but prove yourselves the Israel of God, show us from the Word of God the charter of your corporation, and that your national, provincial, diocesan, and parochial churches are that new Jerusalem, and your inhabitants the right citizens of that city enfranchised with her heavenly liberties, and answer the proofs brought to the contrary; otherwise, though you be never so shameless a beggar of the question in hand, we may not grant it you.

"2. By God's effectual working by his Word, Jer. xxiii. 22, therefore heard is the voice of the Son of God, John v. 25, and the words of eternal life."

God forbid I should deny, either the truths of Christ you have amongst you, or any good effect, which God hath

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wrought by them, but this I deny, that either they are or have been so effectual as to make any one of your parish assemblies, the church of Christ truly gathered and constituted.

And for the place of Jer. xxiii. 22, which as here to prove a true church, so everywhere to prove a true ministry by the effectual work thereof, is so frequently alleged, I desire it may be well considered; and it will appear, that the prophet speaks not at all of the effect of prophesying, but of the drift and intent of the prophets, which, had they taken counsel of the Lord, would not have flattered the people in their sins, by preaching peace, peace, as they did, thereby hardening their hearts and strengthening their hands in their disobedience and rebellion, but would, on the contrary, by denouncing against them the judgments of God, have endeavoured their repentance, as the true prophets did.

And if we must thus judge of true and false prophets by the effects of their ministry, certain it is that neither Ezekiel nor Jeremiah himself stood in God's counsel, but were false prophets, for neither of them were effectual for the people's conversion. Jer. xx. 7, 8; Ezek. iii. 7, 11. And yet a wonder it is to hear what a noise Mr. B. and his people do make with this scripture of Jeremiah, as though it did without contradiction justify both church and ministry by some ministerial effect, where it is most plain to all that but read the chapter with any observation, that the prophet speaks not a word of the effects of their ministry, but of the drift of the ministers, the false prophets desperately flattering the people to their destruction.

"3. By God's most strange and miraculous deliverance of us from the enemies of his Gospel: a promise of God to his people. Lev. xxvi. 7, 8; Deut. xxviii. 7."

These deliverances do no more justify your estate before the Lord, than the deliverance of Samaria out of the hands of the Aramites did, the ten tribes in their apostacy. 1 Kings xx. 13—15.

The Lord doth promise victory and deliverance unto his people in their just quarrels, and use of good means, but ever with condition, of his glory, and their good. And they, thus walking, and being thus delivered, take experience of the truth of his promises, and have cause of rejoicing in the

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God of their salvation; but besides this, there are many other causes of deliverance and victory which, with all other things of the same kind, come alike to all men good and bad, Eccles. ix. 2; and thus to measure the Lord's love by morsels bewrays too carnal a mind in any man: and Mr. B.'s neighbour minister, if he have a fatter benefice than he, may as well avouch himself a better minister, for the quoted scriptures do as well promise plenty and abundance, as deliverance and victory.

And where in the last place you lay to our charge, that though "we like it well that you should call us brethren, yet we will not so acknowledge you, nor do we hold ourselves bound so to admonish you," I do answer, that as we find at your hands, Mr. B. little brotherly dealing, traducing us in all places as Brownists, schismatics, anabaptists, and persons obstinate in sin, so neither indeed can we acknowledge any of you for brethren in that visible communion of saints, which is the church, notwithstanding the loving and respective remembrance, wherein we have very many amongst you, severally considered, for your personal graces.

Our reasons are these:

1. We cannot admonish any of you according to the rule and order of Christ, Matt. xviii., to which duty towards every brother in communion we are absolutely bound.

2. We cannot acknowledge you for our brethren, but we must also acknowledge your prelates for our reverend fathers, under whose blessings we mean not to come.

3. We cannot acknowledge some of you brethren, but we must acknowledge all amongst you for such: for there is but one brotherhood of all amongst you, as your own rhyme teacheth, "and makest us all one brotherhood."* Now by the Scriptures we have not learnt to enter-any such fraternity, where we must acknowledge brother priest, brother half-priest, brother dumb-priest, brother atheist, brother epicure, brother drunkard, brother blasphemer, brother wizard, brother conjuror, and, lastly, brother recusant papist, if not living yet dead, for so you must bury him as your dear brother, committing his soul to God, and his body to the earth.

* The Lord's Prayer in rhyme.

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And for these causes among others, we cannot acknowledge you, as we desire, in that special fellowship of the gospel, and communion of saints.

But disclaim you, the fatherhood of the prelates, the brotherhood of the unhallowed multitude, and feast yourselves in the family and household of God, and we will acknowledge you in word and deed.

We will not, with that ungodly brother, grudge your coming into our Father's house, but will help with our own hands to kill the fat calf, and will make all spiritual melody with you in the Lord.

Fifth Error.

The fifth error reputed is;

"That only saints, that is, a people forsaking all known sin of which they may be convinced, doing all the known will of God, increasing and abiding ever therein, are the only matter of the visible church."

This position, which you account error, rightly understood, and according to his exposition from whom you received it, is an undoubted truth. For of such only, externally, and so far as men can judge, the true church is gathered, whether out of Paganism, Judaism, Antichristianism, or any other idolatrous or adulterous estate whatsoever, and of them alone framed, as of the subject matter: which is only true, whilst it continueth such, and false when it degenerates from this disposition, and so as rotten and putrefied stuff to be cast out of the church.

We will, then, come to your allegations to the contrary.

And first you say, "This is a proper description of the invisible members of Jesus Christ, secluding even hypocrites from being true matter of the visible church."

All the true and faithful members of the visible church, are to me members of the invisible church, to me, I say, which am bound to judge them to be in truth, as outwardly they appear, and so I am taught by the apostle himself, who accounts the whole visible church and every member of it, elect, redeemed, justified, sanctified, Acts xx. 28; 1 Cor. i. 2; Eph. i. 3—5; Gal. iii. 27; Phil. i. 4—7, which are conditions competent to the invisible church.

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And for hypocrites, as they may perform all the conditions here required, visible or to us, as Mr. Smyth hath answered, so do we take knowledge of none such in the church in the particular, till they be known in their day by the outbreakings of sin; and being so discovered, they are no longer to be retained in the church, but to bear their sin, except they repent, and then who can repute them hypocrites?

You object secondly, "that this makes that David, Jehoshaphat, and the church of God in their days were no true matter of a church, for there was marrying many wives, the continuance of the high places, the brazen serpent worshipped, Joab's murder permitted, the bill of divorcement allowed by Moses: so after Corinth and the church of Asia, being admonished, repented not." 2 Cor. xii. 21; Rev. ii. 20, 21.

To let pass here Mr. Smyth's erroneous and anabaptistical answer, wherein he makes the constitution of the Jewish church, the constitution of the old testament; when as the church of the Jews was constituted, in Abraham, four hundred and thirty years before the law or old testament was given, Gen. xvii., Rom. v. 20, Gal. iii. 17, 19, which was after added clean for another end, than to constitute a church: the ordinances and communion he makes merely ceremonial and carnal, which the Scriptures expressly call spiritual, 1 Cor. x. 4, whereof, also, prayer and prophesying were parts; neither are our ordinances more spiritual remembrances of Christ come, Luke xxii. 19, than were theirs in their true and natural relation, spiritual shadows of Christ to come. Heb. x. i.

I do answer to the exception, first, that you cannot prove the holy men you name to have sinned in all the particulars wherewith you charge them, as Moses, in tolerating the bill of divorcement, which you injuriously affirm he allowed, much less can you prove they were convinced of sin in suffering these things, and yet suffered them. Nay is it not your own doctrine, that grace, and continuance in sin without repentance cannot stand together? But what countenance does the infirmities of these holy men give to the profane and graceless multitude against whom we deal? and whom alone we cast out of the account of saints?

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With what conscience or colour can any man bring in the infirmities of Moses, David, and Jehoshaphat to plead the saintship of all that godless crew in the English assemblies?

And for the churches of Corinth, and Thyatira, either they did repent upon admonition, though not at the first, or else the Lord in his time dischurched them, as he threatened in the same, and the like cases. Rev. ii. 5, 16, 21, 22, and iii. 15, 16.

The third exception is that "the Scriptures we bring are places speaking of invisible members properly, of visible figuratively, as they are judged to be, or in hope they may be, or showing what men ought to be, but show not that men are so, or else are not God's people."

It cannot be manifested that we bring one scripture meant of the invisible church, to prove the holiness of the visible church. The vanity of this objection hath been discovered in the exposition of that your picked instance, 1 Pet. ii. It is true indeed that the scriptures we cite speak of men as they are judged to be, and if you would grant, that only they are true members of the church which by the Word of God, which must be the rule of our judgment, may be judged saints, it would end this controversy.

And even for them without, though never so profane, they ought to be holy, and there is hope they may be holy, but God's people must be such as they ought to be in some measure, and so are all they whom he receives into covenant with him, and if they fall from their righteousness and will not be reclaimed, they are to be put out and to be delivered to Satan, 1 Cor. v. 4, 5, whose vassals they are, and not God's people any longer.

In the fourth place, you come to speak of this saintship in question negatively, and affirmatively. First, you deny "men to be called saints in Scripture, either for soundness of knowledge," for proof of which you allege the ignorance of Christ's disciples and others, Acts xix. 1, 2, or "for internal pure affections, for then, say you, Paul had been no saint, Rom. vii. 18, 21, or for holy practice of their duty always:" for which you quote Eccl. vii. 12. Which is all one as if you should say, the Scriptures do not call

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men saints because they are saints, but for some other causes known to you. For what is to be a saint, but to be holy? And what to be holy, but to be of a sound judgment, pure affections, and unblameable conversation? And here, Mr. B., you speak both injuriously and weakly; injuriously, in insinuating against us, as if we held no men saints but such as are free from all human frailties; weakly, in affirming the disciples of Christ had not found knowledge, because they were ignorant of many things: that Paul had no pure affections, because he had some flesh yet dwelling in him: and that there cannot be the constant practice of holy duties, notwithstanding such frailties as to which all men are subject. Whereas to all men of understanding, soundness of judgment is one thing, and infallibility another: purity in affection one thing, and perfection in purity another: and so a holy conversation one thing, and a life without all human frailty another thing, unattainable in this life.

The apostle Paul knew but in part, 1 Cor. xiii. 12: how small then is our pittance in knowledge! and yet our affections come short of our knowledge, and our practice of our affections, and desires: and yet we doubt not, by the riches of the grace of God, but we have all attained to soundness of knowledge, purity of affections, and holiness of conversation, how small and weak soever our measure be.

Thus having considered of the exceptions against such marks of saintship, as we set down, we will come to view the badges, by which the author will have saints descried and acknowledged.

First, say you, men "are called saints because of their outward calling to Christianity, as 1 Cor. i. 1, which is holy and to an holy end." 1 Thess. iv. 7.

If your meaning be, that men because of their external calling on God's part, or that the gospel is preached unto them, are therefore saints, whether they believe the gospel, or believe it not, you mistake too much, for then all the persecutors and blasphemers to whom Paul preached, should be saints: yea, it is an error to think that Paul styles any saints, by calling in that place but such as were

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truly sanctified, so far as he could discern. For the same persons he terms saints, by calling, he acknowledges in the same as sanctified in the Lord Jesus, which implies both justification and sanctification.

And where you add, that the end of the church is holiness, 1 Thess. iv. 7, as the thing you affirm is true, so the truth of it is sufficient to manifest the unholy constitution of your church, and your as unholy defence of it. For if the end of the calling of the church be sanctity and holiness to the glory of God, which is the supreme end, Matt. v. 16; then the constitution and gathering of the Church of England, which at the first was, I mean after the Romish apostasy, and still is of persons for the most part apparently unholy and unsanctified, as it is most prejudicial to the glory of God, so doth it not only frustrate but most directly cross and oppose the end for which the Lord in great mercy, wisdom, and holiness, separateth his church and people unto himself from the rest of the profane world.

And as it is a certain sign that a minister is not called into his place, if he be not in some measure qualified with such holy gifts and graces as serve to the ends of the ministry to which he is called, which you both affirm, and confirm undeniably, pages 132 and 133 of this book, so is it also in just proportion a certain and infallible argument, that the national Church of England, and so of the churchlings under it, is not called into covenant and communion with God; being gathered of such persons, in the body of it, as are only utterly unanswerable but clean contrarily affected to the ends of the true church, which are holiness and the glory of God.

And where you, Mr. B., would fasten the name of saints upon people unworthy of it, by a similitude drawn from "a minister at the first rightly called to his office, but after showing himself unworthy of it, whom you will still have called a minister:" I answer, that if he were known to be unworthy of it at the first, or not known to be worthy, he was not rightly called either to the office, or by the name: and if he afterwards show himself unworthy, he is to be censured accordingly, and so with the office, to forfeit the name, though he hold both with you; and so it is with men in

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the general calling of Christianity; they that are unworthy of it are never called of God to take it upon them, and if they prove unworthy afterwards, they are to be deprived of Christian society.

2. "Because of the profession of faith in Christ who maketh all true believers and holy saints."

It is true you say that "Christ makes all true believers holy and saints, but I deny that every profession of faith in Christ argues a true believer. A false dissembler is he, and no true believer, that in word pretends faith in Christ, and in deed denies him.

3. "In respect of baptism, by which externally, the party baptized, is to be judged to have put on Christ, Gal. iii. 27, to have remission of his sins, Acts ii. 39, to be partaker of Christ's death, Rom. vi. 3, 4; Col. ii. 21, and to have assurance of salvation, 1 Peter iii. 21.

All persons baptized neither do in truth, nor are by us to be judged to have put on Christ, to have remission of sins, &c., but only such as to whom by virtue of the covenant of grace, baptism appertaineth. We must not conceive of baptism as of a charm, or think it effectual to all it is put upon, but must judge it available and of use, according to the covenant of promise which God hath made to the faithful and their seed, and none otherwise, Gen. xvii. 7, xxvi. 4; Acts ii. 38, 39, iii. 25; 1 Cor. vii. 14.

And baptism, administered to any others, is so far from investing them with any saintship in that estate, as it makes guilty both the giver and receiver of sacrilege, and is the taking of God's name in vain.

4. "In respect of the better part, though the fewer by many, for thus the Scripture speaks, ascribing to all, that which is due properly but to some;". Deut. i. 23, 24; 1 Cor. v. 1, vi. 11; 2 Cor. xii. 21.

The Scriptures never ascribe holiness to a people for some few's sake, if the rest be unholy and profane. I read in the Scriptures that unclean persons and things do pollute and unhallow clean persons and things, Lev. xiv. 46, 47; xv. 4, 11, 12; Hag. ii. 12—14; and that a "little leaven leavens the whole lump," 1 Cor. v. 6, 7; but that clean persons or things should hallow persons or things

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which are unclean, or that a little sweet meal should make sweet a sour lump, that read I not, but the contrary confirmed by the forenamed scriptures. And for the Church of the Jews and of Corinth in which you instance, as they were holy, omitting other respects, for the holy covenant into which the Lord had assumed the body of them, Rom. xi. 16, so were the desperately wicked amongst them no true members of the body, but as putrefied and rotten parts to be cut off, and cast out from the rest. And where Paul writes to the church at Corinth, styles them saints, and advertises them to excommunicate the incestuous person, what can be more unreasonably affirmed than that the incestuous person was one of these saints? as though Paul had written to him to cast out himself, which must needs follow by Mr. B.'s assertion and proofs of it.

5. "In respect of the visible signs of God's favour," promise, and presence to be with his, &c., as Jerusalem was called the holy city. Matt. iv. 5.

But we deny your national church to be that "holy city, the new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven." Rev. xxi. 2. It is rather Babylon, though much purged and repaired. And Babylon cannot be Jerusalem, nor was ever holy, notwithstanding the spoils of Jerusalem, and of the temple also be found there: as were in the civil Babylon many Israelites captived, and with them the holy vessels, the holy instruments, yea, the holy writings of the prophets, and their persons also, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 18; Psa. cxxxvii. 1, 2; Dan. ix. 1, 2.

6. "In respect of God's good pleasure who looks not upon his church, as the particular members thereof are, but as he accepteth of them: therefore it is said, "He saw none iniquity in Jacob, nor transgression in Israel." Numb. xxiii. 21, and yet Israel was then "an unbelieving and stiffnecked people."

Here you say and unsay with one breath. You grant Israel to have been an holy people and without iniquity, as Balaam spake, in the Lord's acceptance according to His good pleasure, and yet to have been at the same time an unbelieving and stiffnecked people, which affirmation as it contains in it an apparent contradiction, so doth it

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lay upon God an unsufferable imputation, as though he took pleasure in the wicked, or did accept of them.

It cannot be denied but the people, ever and anon, rose up in rebellion against the Lord: and for instance in the chapter next but one before going, through impatience of their ordinary food, they murmured against God, and against Moses. Numb. xxi. 4, 5.

But did things so continue? No verily, "for the Lord sent fiery serpents amongst them, and destroyed many of them, and by his correction brought the rest to repentance:" ver. 6, 7. And now, as at other times, when they provoked him, smit them with grievous plagues and punishments, and so causing them to pass under the rod and picking out the chief rebels, and sifting out the sinners to destruction, and brought them again into the covenant. Exod. xxxii. 27; Numb. xi. 1, 2; Psa. lxxviii. 17—19, 21, 31, &c.; Ezek. xx. 37, 38; Amos ix. 8—10.

And thus much of your respects of saintship, whereof some are not true in themselves, others impertinent to your estate, and the most, flatly condemning it.

And though you, Mr. B., say it never so oft, and all the divines in world with you, and as here you speak, that the visible church is a mixed company, as your very own book of articles affirms the contrary, describing the church to be a company of faithful people, yet do the divine Scriptures speak otherwise, which I will clearly manifest, and therein also free the parable, Matt. xiii., which you bring in for proofs, from that violence, which you and others offer them: forcing Christ clean against his will to plead for antichrist. And with the Scriptures I do affirm against you, that the church of Christ is no such mingled meslin,* or monstrous compound, but a body simple, uniform, and one, proportionable in every member unto the head, informed by one Spirit, and called in one hope. Eph. iv. 4.

And for wicked and ungodly persons, so far are they from being the true natural members, whereof the body consisteth, as the whole of the parts, as they serve indeed for no other purpose than to infect and corrupt the rest, and if redress be not had in time, to eat out the very heart of the whole.

* Meslin. The flour of different kinds of grain, or wheat, rye, &c., mixed together.

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But before I come to the point in controversy, I will lay down two cautions for the preventing of error in the simple, and of cavilling in such as desire to contend.

First, it must be considered, that where the question is about the visible or external church which is by men discernible, and not of that church which is internal and invisible, which only the Lord knoweth, we speak here of visible and external holiness only, whereof men may judge, and not of that which is within and hid from man's eye. For we doubt not but the purest church upon earth may consist of good and bad in God's eye, of such as are truly faithful, and sanctified, and of such as have only for a time put on the outside and vizard of sanctity, which the Lord will in due time pluck off, though in the meanwhile man's dim sight cannot pierce through it.

Second, I desire it may be remembered that the question betwixt Mr. B. and me, is about the true and natural members whereof the church is orderly gathered and planted, and not about the degenerate and decayed estate of the church and members; for we know that natural children may become rebellious, the faithful city an harlot, the silver, dross, and the wine corrupt with water: the noble vine so planted whose plants were all natural, may degenerate into the plants of a strange vine, Isa. i. 2, 21, 22; Jer. ii. 21. But as it were fond philosophy, in the description of wives and children, and their true and natural properties, to make rebellion a property of a child, because many children prove rebels against their parents, or to make whoredom a property of a wife, because many wives prove unfaithful that way, so is it as profane divinity to make ungodly persons the true matter of the church, and their profaneness a true property of the same, because many seeming saints at the first do so creep in, and do afterwards discover their own shame, and are ofttimes through want of zeal too long tolerated in the church, to the dishonour of God and prejudice of the gospel.

And so I come to manifest, by an induction of particulars, that all the visible churches gathered and planted by the Lord's line and level from the beginning of the world were in their collection and constitution, simple, uniform, and unmixed, consisting of good alone in the respect in hand.

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And first, the Lord created a church of angels in heaven, which were all good and holy without mixture, till some by sin fell from their first and original estate, and so leaving their own habitation were cast down to hell. 2 Pet. ii. 4: Jude vi.

After that, God created a church of mankind in Paradise, consisting of two persons both holy and good. And thus, the churches of creation were gathered of angels and men without mixture.

Now if any man object that, in these instances, I fetch my beginnings too far off, my answer is, that the Lord had and hath the same ends and respects in the creating and restoring of his church, which are his own glory and their happiness. And, if it were the will of the Lord that persons notoriously wicked should be admitted into the church: then should he directly cross himself and his own ends, and should receive into the visible covenant of grace, such as were out of the visible estate of grace, and should plant such in his church for the glory of his name, as served for none other use than to cause his name to be blasphemed. Hereupon I frame an argument thus:—

That order for the gathering of churches, which directly crosses the main ends for which the Lord would have his church gathered, is not of God.

But the order, for which Mr. B. pleads, which is, that apparently profane persons may with the godly be gathered into the visible church, crosses the Lord's ends of gathering churches: and therefore is not of God.

The former proposition is without controversy, the latter is thus manifested:—

The main ends for which the Lord gathereth and preserveth his church upon earth, are that he might have a peculiar people, separated unto himself from all other peoples, to call upon his name in faith and to glorify him their heavenly Father in their holy conversation, whom he also might glorify in the end of their faith, the salvation of their souls. But for wicked and ungodly persons in the church, as they serve no way for these ends, but the contrary, causing God's name to be blasphemed, and his wrath to come upon their disobedience, so to gather or admit them into the church is utterly to frustrate God's

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ends, and to gather for Satan rather than for God. Levit. xx. 26; Gen. iv. 26; Matt. v. 16; 1 Pet. ii. 12; Acts ii. 47; 1 Pet. i. 7, 9; Rom. ii. 24; Eph. v. 6.

To proceed. In the restoring of mankind and planting the first church in the covenant of grace established in "the seed of the woman," Gen. iii. 24, 25, there were only saints, without any such mixture as Mr. B. makes. Now as all true churches from the beginning to the end of the world are one in nature and essential constitution, and the first, the rule of the rest, so the first being gathered of good matter not bad, declares both Mr. B.'s church and opinion to be bad, and not good.

And when in process of time, Cain which was of the evil one, 1 John iii. 12, betrayed himself, he as a degenerate branch was broken off, and driven out of the visible presence of God, Gen. iv. 14; it is further imputed by Moses for sin to the sons of God that they married with the daughters of men. Gen. vi. 2. Now if it were, and still be, unlawful for the godly to contract with the wicked, in the civil covenant of marriage, how much more in the religious covenant of the church and communion of saints! 1 Cor. vii. 39.

To descend lower. God gave unto Abraham and his family the covenant of circumcision, Gen. xvii. 10, which the apostle, Rom. iv. 11, calls "the seal of the righteousness of faith." Now to affirm that the Lord would seal up with the visible seal of the righteousness of faith any visibly unrighteous and faithless person, were a bold challenge of the Most High, for the profanation of his own ordinance. And the same covenant which God, at the first, made with Abraham, and continued with Isaac and Jacob, he after renewed with the whole church, sundry times, upon their repentance, in regard whereof the Scriptures give very honourable testimony of all and every one of them: as that they were the Lord's pleasant plant, and vineyards hedged in, planted with the best plants, yea a noble vine, whose plants were all natural, yea natural branches, though they did ofttimes degenerate into the plant of a strange vine, Isa. v. 1—5; Jer. ii. 21; and were therefore ofttimes forsaken of God, and in the end for their infidelity quite broken off. Rom. xi. 16, 17.

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Lastly, when John Baptist the forerunner of Christ, Christ himself, and his apostles were to repair the desolations of Sion, and to plant the Gentiles into the root of the Jews, and to make them one inheritance, and one body with them, they did not by the co-active laws of men shuffle together good and bad as intending a new monster or chimera, but admitted of such, and none other, as confessed their sin and justified God: as were not of the world, but chosen out of it, and hated of it: as did receive the word gladly, and communicate all of them in all things, as every one had need, and that in gladness and singleness of heart: as received testimony by the Holy Ghost himself that they were such as should be saved: as were all of them purchased with the blood of God: as for all whom there was cause to thank God: as whom the apostle did remember in his prayers with gladness, being persuaded that God could perfect his good work begun in them, as became him to judge of them all, being all partakers of the grace of God with him in the confirmation of the gospel, and after all whom he longed from the very heart-root in Christ; as for all whom he gave thanks, always making mention of them in his prayers without ceasing, remembering their effectual faith, diligent love, and patient hope in the Lord Jesus, which did grow in every one of them. Rom. xi. 17; Eph. iii. 6; Matt. iii. 6; Luke vii. 29, 30; John xv. 18, 19, xvii. 16; Acts ii. 41, 42, 46, xx. 28; Rom. i. 8; Phil. i. 3—8; 1 Thess. i. 2, 3; and 2 Thess. i. 3.

Here is no such mingle-mangle as Mr. B. would make of good and bad, but all good, and so avowed by the Holy Ghost, though without doubt many of these were masked and hollow-hearted hypocrites, whose goodness was but as the goodness of Ephraim and Judah, like the morning cloud, and like the dew which falls in the morning, and fades away. Hos. vi. 4.

And now I will come to the two parables, Matt. xiii. with which, as with two mighty engines, Mr. B. and others will needs push over the partition wall of separation of the saints from the world, of righteousness from unrighteousness, of light from darkness, of Christ from Belial, of the believers from the unbelievers.

And for ingress into the exposition of these two parables

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of the field, and draw-net, I do desire it may be considered, that for the attaining of the right sense of the Scriptures, we must remember to interpret the more dark and obscure places, by places more plain and easy: and so parables being dark speeches, and more hardly understood without express exposition, Matt. xiii. 10, 11; Mark iv. 11, 12, are not to expound plain rules, but to be expounded by them. Which proviso alone being observed might stand instead of all answer to whatsoever, out of these perverted parables, could be objected.

The point is, Mr. B., following, I confess, the most beaten way, makes the field the visible church, and the tares scandalous offenders, seen and discovered. Whereupon it must follow, that as the Lord forbids the servants to meddle with the tares, or with the plucking them up, but will have them and the wheat to grow together in the field till the harvest, so both ministers and people are straitly prohibited and forbidden any way to admonish and censure wicked and scandalous persons in the church, but must let them there remain without disturbance, till the last judgment.

The venomous weeds, the noisome tares, idolaters, heretics, covetous persons, blasphemers and all, whose nature is to overspread and choke the wheat, must be suffered still to grow with it. And thus, at once, by this one profane gloss, all the texts of scriptures, and commandments of Christ, both for admonitions, and excommunications, are utterly voided and annihilated. The brethren, nay the ministers themselves, may not meddle with the tares, the wicked, to admonish or reprove them, they must be let alone; the sword of the censures so graciously given to cut off rotten members, must no more now be drawn out, but must rust in the sheath of this exposition, notwithstanding all the plain scriptures to the contrary, Lev. xix. 17; 1 Thess. v. 14; 1 Tim. v. 20; 2 Tim. iv. 2; Matt. xviii. 15; 1 Cor. v. 4, 5. All the power of our Lord Jesus Christ given to his church, for the rooting out of obstinate offenders, and casting down of everything exalting itself against the knowledge of God, is not only weakened, but even disannulled by this unreasonable exposition, that tares, that is, notorious offenders must still be suffered to grow in the field, the church.

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And if the parable be thus meant, how can it be defended that any church should cast out any offenders whomsoever? How dare the prelates in England, with their substitutes take this forbidden weed-hook into their hands, and use it against any tare amongst them? If any tares be to be plucked up, why not all? and if all be to be let alone, why meddle they with any? Indeed, I must needs acknowledge and will not wrong them, that if they should execute their own canons, as they have framed them, they should not very oft practise against this exposition, nor gather the tares from among the wheat, but the wheat from amongst the tares. But to proceed. It may be some will answer, that Christ doth not here absolutely forbid his disciples the use of the censures against the wicked, but rather acquaints them beforehand what will be the estate of the church: and how the wicked will be suffered to continue in it uncensured. And if this were so, it made nothing against me, nor for Mr. B.: it were the church's sin so to suffer them, and I deny not but churches usually are too negligent and remiss, through want of zeal and faithfulness to the Lord in this duty. But it is plain the Lord Jesus lays a flat prohibition against the weeding out of these tares, and expressly commands to let them alone: and this commandment also he backs with two substantial reasons, the first, lest they pluck up the wheat with the tares, ver. 29: the second, because the Lord hath appointed another time, the time of the harvest for the plucking them out, ver. 30. Now some being ashamed of the grossness, and indeed of the iniquity of this exposition, would fain moderate and qualify the matter, by turning it off to these and these sins, and sinners. Some say that by the tares are meant the ministers only, and that they are not to be meddled with, though they transgress, lest the wheat be plucked up with them: as though the Lord would have the persons of men respected in judgment: yea verily there is more need to look to them in such cases, than to any private members whomsoever, as whose sins are more displeasing unto God, more scandalous to them without, and more pernicious to the church than of any others. Some again will have this prohibition only to take place, when the multitude of the offenders is so great, as that they cannot be censured without danger of schism, and distrac-

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tion, as though the multitude of offenders should privilege the offence, and as though the Lord Jesus by his power given to his church, 1 Cor. v. 4, should fear to meddle with them for their multitude, and might, as David feared to meddle with the sons of Zeruiah, because they were too hard for him. The apostle saith, speaking of the incestuous man, that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump: 1 Cor. v. 6: how much more a great deal, which makes all more sour!

And for answer to both, it is apparent the Lord here forbids the rooting out of any tares, whether fewer or more in number, whether of high or low growth.

Let men then cease to draw in by the hair of the head these parables for the tolerating of the wicked in the church: an intolerable wickedness, as most prejudicial to the name of God, which is by this means blasphemed, to the parties' salvation, who by this connivancy is hardened in his sin, where by due censuring, he should be humbled: to the health and safety of the body which is hereby corrupted and defiled, and to the conversion of them without, who by the holy conversation of the church should be provoked to the love of the truth. Isa. lii. 5; Rom. ii. 24; 1 Cor. v. 5; Heb. xii. 15; Matt. v. 16; 1 Pet. ii. 12; 2 Pet. iii. 1.

These things being thus cleared, I come in the next place to the true and natural exposition, which, I doubt not, these scriptures will well bear.

I do then find two interpretations, either of both, I am assured, more agreeable to the truth, than this forced gloss by me confuted, and neither of them containing in it anything which the words of the parable will not bear, or which is dissonant to the analogy of faith or any other scripture.

First, admit the field be the church, which Christ expounds the world, then say I, by tares in the field are meant, not notorious offenders, but hypocrites, not so thoroughly discovered, which by the envy of Satan are foisted into the church. It will be said that tares are easily discerned from wheat: I answer, not always, so though oaks may, as one of your own hath spoken upon this scripture:* and it is certainly reported by such as have travelled in Judea, and those parts, to which the

* Vide Cartwright Com. in loco.

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Lord hath reference, that the weeds we call tares, are there very hardly discerned from the true wheat. If it be further pressed, that the tares are espied, I do further answer, that it is in parables both curiosity and danger to labour to make all parts meet in every particular: and since this particular of spying the tares is omitted by Christ in the exposition we may well be modest in it. But let it be that the tares are seen, as the words are, the question is, who those servants are espying them, and so desiring to have them rooted out. These servants may well be some special persons in the church endued with a singular spirit of watchfulness and discerning, by which they do discover in some persons this tarish disposition under the veil of holiness: so Paul spied out that bitter root of envy and pride, by which some were set a-work to preach Christ, Phil. i. 15, 16: such persons notwithstanding must be borne till their sins be ripe, and the Lord lead them forth amongst the workers of iniquity. Psa. cxxv. 5. Or, by the servants may be here meant the angels, who by conversing much with the church, both can and, without doubt, do through the subtilty of their nature, and long experience spy out in the church much cloaked wickedness, and impiety, which as the zealous ministers of God's justice they are ready to revenge.

But since the Lord Jesus, who best knew his own meaning, calls the field the world, ver. 38, and makes the harvest, ver. 39, which is the end of the field, the end of the world, and not of the church, why should we admit of any other interpretation? Neither is it likely, that Christ would in the expounding of one parable, speak another, as he should have done, if calling the field the world, he had meant the church. As God, then, in the beginning made man good, and placed him in the field of the world there to grow, where by the envy of the serpent he was soon corrupted, so ever since hath the seed of the serpent, stirred up, by their father the devil, snarled at the heel of the woman's seed, and like noisome tares vexed and pestered the good and holy seed, which though the children of God both see and feel to their pain, yet must they not, therefore, forgetting what spirit they are of, presently call for fire from heaven, Luke ix. 54, 56, nor prevent the Lord's hand, but wait his leisure,

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either for the converting of these tares into wheat, which in many is daily seen, and, then, how great pity had it been they should so untimely have been plucked up: or for their final perdition in the day of the Lord, when the church shall be no more offended by them.

And that the Lord Jesus no way speaks of the toleration of profane persons in the church doth appear by these reasons:—

First, because, as hath been observed, he doth not contradict himself, by forbidding the use of the keys in one place, which in another he hath turned upon impenitent offenders. Matt. xviii. 15—17.

Second, in the excommunication of sinners, apparently obstinate, with due circumspection and in the spirit of wisdom, meekness, and long-suffering, with such other general Christian virtues as with which all our special sacrifices ought to be seasoned, what danger can there be of any such disorder, as the plucking up of the wheat with the tares, which the husbandman feareth? ver. 29.

Lastly, the Lord Jesus speaks of the utter ruinating and destruction of the tares, the gathering and plucking them up by the roots, ver. 28, 29, and to this end they are reserved by the husbandman, ver. 30, ever presupposed they so continued, but excommunication rightly administered is not for the ruin and destruction of any, but for the salvation of the party thereby humbled. 1 Cor. v. 5.

But to conclude, admit of Mr. B.'s exposition, and that the field here is the visible church, the good seed, the good and godly, the tares, wicked and ungodly persons, I am contented, that the difference in this place betwixt him and me be tried at the tribunal of this very scripture, even thus expounded, and I doubt not but it will pronounce a clear sentence on my side in the thing for which I contend: and that is, that the church, in the right gathering of it out of Antichristianism, or Paganism, out of Babylon, Egypt, Sodom spiritually or civilly so called, or out of any other society or synagogue, which is not the true, visible body of Christ, must be and is constituted and compact of good only, and not of good and evil.

The Lord's field is sown only with good seed, ver. 24, 27, 38, his "vine noble, and all the seed true," Jer. ii. 21; his

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church "saints and beloved of God," all and every one of them, Rom. i. 7, 8; though by the malice of Satan, and negligence of such as should keep this field, and vineyard, and house of God, adulterate seed and abominable persons may be foisted in, yea and suffered also, which the Scriptures affirm, and we deny not. But our exception in this case is, first, that the Church of England was never truly gathered, the Church of England I say, that is, the National Church, consisting of the provincial churches, and those of the diocesan churches, and the diocesans of the parochial churches, according to their parish precincts with their governors and government correspondent. That there were true visible churches in the land, gathered out of Paganism at the first, I will not deny; but that ever the whole land, in the body of it, was a church is an affirmation of them, which consider not what is either the matter whereof, or the manner how the church of the New Testament is to be gathered. Second, grant that the way of the kingdom of Christ, the church, were now so wide that a whole nation might walk abreast in it, and that England had been sometimes that Canaan, the holy land, wherein none uncircumcised person dwelt; yet in the apostacy of Antichrist it could not be so accounted, but was, in the body of it, divorced from Christ with Rome, whereof it was a member, except you, Mr. B., will affirm, as many do, that Rome remains still a true visible church, and that Antichristianism is true Christianism, Antichristians true Christians, the body which hath the Pope the head, the true body of Christ: and so, except the Church of England had been sown with good seed without tares since that general apostacy, it cannot be the Lord's field.

The Jews were forbidden by God under the law to "sow their field with divers seeds," Lev. xix. 19, and will he sow his own field with divers, yea with contrary seeds, wheat, and tares? What husbandman is either so foolish, or careless, as to sow his field with tares and wheat together? And yet this fair field of England, of whose beauty all the Christian world is enamoured, is so sown, this pleasant orchard so planted, this flourishing church so gathered. A few kernels of wheat scattered amongst the tares here and there, a few good plants amongst the wild branches, a small sprink-

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ling of good men amongst the great and retchless rout* of wicked and graceless persons. And was this field sown, this orchard planted, this church gathered, by the Lord's hand?

And as was the root, so are the branches; as were the first-fruits, so is the whole lump.

To conclude this point, thus I reason:—The Lord's field is sown with good seed only, though tares may, in time, be conveyed into it by the devil's malice and man's negligence. But the English National Church was not so sown, but with tares and wheat together.

Therefore it is not the Lord's field.

And thus I hope the indifferent reader will easily see what succour Mr. B. finds amongst those tares, under whose shadow he would so fain shroud all the atheists, papists, and other flagitious persons in the church.

Now for the parable of the draw-net, Matt. xiii. I confess the bad fishes may be wicked persons in the church, but undiscerned, as fishes under the water, between which and the good no difference is seen. If the fishers and they that drew the nets did know of the bad fishes in them, and had means of voiding them, they would never burden themselves, and the net with them, except you will have as foolish fishermen here, as you had husbandmen before; but till they do discern them to be as they are, they must take them, as they hope they are; though, with you, all be fish that come to the net, yea good fish too, till the commissary's court judge otherwise.

And lastly, to your saying, "well it were that all were saints: but that is to look for a heaven upon earth," I answer that the church is heaven upon earth: and if you were not a stranger to the true church and to such scriptures as speak of it, you should find as, in many other places, so especially in the Revelation, the church visible oft dignified with the name of heaven and with no name oftener. Yea to seek no further than these two parables brought in by you to speak against heaven, that is, against the true and natural constitution and conservation of the visible church, Christ himself and that with his own mouth gives the church no worse name than "heaven," and "the kingdom of heaven," and the only ordinary beaten way

* Careless multitude.

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which Christ hath left to heaven in heaven, is heaven on earth, which way soever you please to guide men. Rev. iv. 1, 2, and vi. 13, 14, and viii. 1, 10, 13, and xi. 6, 19, and xii. 1, 3, 7, &c.; Matt. xiii. 24—47.

Sixth Error.

The sixth insinuation against us is that we hold,—

"That the power of Christ, that is, authority to preach, to administer the sacraments, and to exercise the censures of the church, belongeth to the whole church, yea to every one of them, and not to the principal members thereof."—p. 88.

Explanations.

If Mr. B. were but as able to confute us by just reason, as he is willing to bring us into hatred by unjust and odious accusations, we should then have as much cause to fear his skill, as now we have to complain of his malice. Only herein his skill is to be commended, that where he finds not our opinions such as he thinks will be disliked by the simple multitude, he makes them such, and so deals against them.

Here come in many things of great weight to be discussed: and although it were in itself the readiest way to reduce things to some heads, and so to prosecute them in order, yet since I have taken this task upon me to trace Mr. B. in the particulars, therefore I purpose to follow him step by step, notwithstanding all his unorderly wanderings and excursions.

And first, Mr. B. charging us with error for giving authority to preach, minister the sacraments, exercise the censures to the whole church, and not to the principal members thereof, plainly insinuates that the authority to do all these things amongst them is in the principal members of the church. But the truth is otherwise in the parish church of Worksop, and in all other the parish churches in the land. You have one only member that hath power, and that under the ordinary, to any of these things, and that yourself the parish priest, though, perhaps, the parish clerk may by special indulgence be licensed to bury the dead, church women, read service on light holydays, and do some such-like drudgery in your absence.

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But for the exercising of the censures, that belongs not to the whole body, or to any member thereof principal, or less principal, but to the bishops and his substitute, which are foreigners and strangers, as in their office from the true church, so even in their persons from yours. All your portion in the censures, Mr. B., is to do the executioner's office, when the official hath played the judge, which if you should be so bold as to refuse, besides the punishment of your contumacy, the church door would do your office, for the bull of excommunication hanged up there by the sumner* binds the offenders both in heaven and earth. And for the position itself, howsoever we do indeed maintain the most of the particulars against which Mr. B. intends his refutation, yet as he sets it down, we do utterly disclaim it with all the errors in it.

First, for teaching in the church we do not use it promiscuously, nor suffer it to be used but according to the order, as we are persuaded, which Christ and his apostles have prescribed. Secondly, for the sacraments, the contrary to that which you affirm is to be seen of all men in our "Confession of Faith," Article 34, wherein it is held that "no sacraments are to be administered until pastors or teachers be ordained in their office:" neither have we practised otherwise? And this Mr. B. knew, when he writ this book, as well as ourselves.

Thirdly, touching the censures we do expressly confess that "the power, as to receive in, so to cut off any member is given to the whole body together of every christian congregation, and not to any one member a part, or to more members sequestered from the whole, using the meetest member for the pronouncing the censures." Article 34. And answerable to our profession is our practice: with what conscience then or credit Mr. B. can father upon us those bastardly runagates, let God and men judge.

These things being thus, the untruths which he saith we build upon this opinion are his and not ours; as the groundwork is his, so is the whole building raised from it. But touching interpretation of Scripture by private brethren, and pollution by sin unreformed in the church, and sepa-

* Summoner or apparitor, citing parties to appear in Ecclesiastical Courts.

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nation from it for the same, we shall speak in their places. Only I desire it may be observed, that rather than Mr. B. will forbear to accuse us that we hold it lawful for one person to excommunicate the whole church, he will back this most odious calumniation with as fond and false an assertion: and that is, that "separating from a church and excommunicating of it is all one in substance, though called less odiously." But the contrary is manifested by these two reasons.

First, excommunication is a sentence judicial, presupposing ever a solemn and superior power over the party sentenced: but no such thing is inferred upon separation.

Second, excommunication is only of them which are within and of the church, 1 Cor. v. 12, 13; Matt. xviii. 15, 17, 18; but separation may be from them without. And I would know of Mr. B. whether a person, though never so mean, might not separate from the assemblies of Pagans, Turks, Jews, Papists, and other heretics, and idolaters? I hope he would not draw such a man within his separatists' schism: and yet for the same person to excommunicate such an assembly were a sinful profanation of God's ordinance. And though we held (as we do nothing less) that one man might excommunicate the whole church, yet were it not more, as you affirm, than your church allows to any bishop in England, no nor so much by a thousand parts: for one bishop with you may excommunicate a thousand churches; every diocesan bishop, all the churches in his diocese; the two provincial bishops, their two provinces, so livelily do the reverend fathers the bishops resemble the holy father the pope, which may judge all men, but be judged by none.

How many make a Church, and can a Church exist without Officers?

The next collection made against us is that we hold, "that two or three gathered together must be a church which hath the whole power of Christ, and may presently make them officers and use the discipline of Christ."

No such haste, Mr. B., of making officers presently: we make no dumb ministers: neither dare we admit of any man either for a teaching or governing elder, of whose

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ability in prayer, prophesying, and debating of church matters we have not had good experience, before he be so much as nominated to the office of an elder amongst us: remembering always the deep charge of the apostle "to lay hands suddenly on no man, nor to be partakers of other men's sins." 1 Tim. v. 21, 22.

But this we hold and affirm, that a company, consisting though but of two or three, separated from the world, whether unchristian, or antichristian, and gathered into the name of Christ by a covenant made to walk in all the ways of God known unto them, is a church, and so hath the whole power of Christ. And for the clearing of this truth I will propound, and so prove by the Scriptures these two heads.

1st. That a company of faithful people thus covenanting together are a church, though they be without any officers among them, contrary to that your Popish opinion here insinuated, (page 99,) and elsewhere expressed, that a company is nowhere in all the New Testament called a church, Christian families excepted, but when they have their officers, and that otherwise they are called believers, disciples, but not a church but only by anticipation, as heaven and earth are so called before they were, Gen. i. 1, and that the officers give them the denomination of a church.

2nd. That this company being a church hath interest in all the holy things of Christ, within and amongst themselves, immediately under him the head, without any foreign aid, and assistance. Of which holy things in particular we shall consider as they come in our way.

These two grounds, by the grace of God, I will prove in order: and for the confirmation of the former take these reasons:

The first is gathered from the author's own words, that a company of holy persons, without officers, are called believers, disciples, but not a church which is all one, as if he said, that a church is not called a church, for the word church, ἐκκλησία, is no more than a company or assembly howsoever gathered together, Acts xix. 32—40: and so a set company of visible believers must needs be a constituted visible church: and to manifest the vanity of that distinction, that one place shall serve, Acts xi. 26, where in the same verse the

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same persons are called the church, disciples, and Christians.

Two or three or more people making Peter's confession, Matt. xvi. 16, are the church. But two or three or more may make this confession without officers. Therefore such a company is a church.

The former proposition is evident by that promise Christ made "to build his church upon the rock" of Peter's confession. Matt. xvi. 16—18.

The second, namely, that men without officers may profess their faith, is without question, except we will hold that without officers no men can be saved. Rom. x. 10.

Thirdly. If the New Testament speak of ordaining elders in the church, then doth it necessarily conclude, yea expressly affirm, that there were churches before elders were ordained in them.

But the first is manifest, Acts xiv. 23, therefore the second. Neither can Mr. B. shift off the place by saying such assemblies are called churches by "anticipation," any more than the Papists can the scripture, 1 Cor. xi. 26, against transubstantiation, by alleging that the apostle speaks by posticipation. For why may not the papists as well answer that Paul calls Christ's body bread, not because it is bread, but because it was bread before the words of consecration, as Mr. B.: that Luke calls the assemblies without officers churches, not because they were so, but were so to be after the elders were ordained amongst them; neither is it true which you affirm for confirmation of your distinction, that heaven and earth were so called before they were, Gen. i. 1; the meaning of Moses only is, that God created heaven and earth first, and when before they were not.

If yet it be further answered by any, that the church, Acts xiv., had apostles over them, it must be remembered, that Luke in that place and action of ordination notes out three distinct orders of people, the apostles ordaining elders, the elders ordained, and the churches in which the apostles ordained elders.

Fourthly. Of the same nature is the fourth argument grounded upon 1 Cor. xii. 28, where God is said to have appointed or set in the church apostles, prophets, teachers,

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necessarily implying a church before, wherein they were appointed: as a sheriff appointed in a shire, a mayor in a city, a constable in a parish, a steward in a family, do necessarily presuppose the shire, city, parish, family, wherein they are appointed. And indeed where should the Lord set his stewards but in his family? Is any society capable of the Lord's officers but his corporation? Is not the eldership an ordinance given to the church? and so the elders called the elders of the church. The church is not an ordinance given to the elders, nor ever called their church in the whole New Testament. Acts xx. 28.

Fifthly. They with whom the Lord makes his covenant to be their God, and to have them his people, to dwell amongst them as in his temple, which have right to the promises of Christ, and to his presence, they are the church of God, and of Christ. Gen. xvii. 7; Lev. xxvi. 11, 12; Mat. xviii. 17—20; Rev. i. 11—13; Heb. viii. 16.

But a company of faithful people, though they have no officers amongst them, may be received into covenant with God, may be his temple, and have him dwell amongst them, may have right to Christ and to his promises, and presence; except we will say, they may not be gathered in Christ's name, may not be called, may not come out from among unbelievers nor separate themselves and touch none unclean thing; except they have ministers going before them. Matt. xviii. 17—20; Acts ii. 39; 2 Cor. vi. 16, 17. For they that may separate themselves from unbelievers, may be the temple of God, that is the true visible church, which the temple typed out. 2 Cor. vi. 16.

Men are not to come out of Babylon, and there to stand still, and remember the Lord afar off, but must resort to the place where he hath put his name, for which they need not go either to Jerusalem, or to Rome, or beyond the seas; they may find Sion the Lord's mountain prepared on the top of every hill. If they as lively stones couple themselves together by voluntary profession and covenant, they are a spiritual building, the Lord's temple. 1 Pet. ii. 9.

Sixthly. If a company of faithful people without officers be not a church, then if all the officers of a church should die or fall away, the church should be nullified, and become no church: and to come nearer home, (granting for

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a while the parish of Worksop to be a company of faithful people, if Mr. Bernard should leave his vicarage for a better, then the church of Worksop should be dischurched, and remain a church no longer: and thus an assembly might be churched and unchurched, and churched again every week in the time of persecution or plague, by having and losing, and recovering again her officers: and thus the officers should not be the eyes or tongue of the body, for the body remains a true, though an imperfect, body without them, but the head of it: yea the Pope though he hold himself the head of the church, yet acknowledgeth it a church without him, and in the time of vacancy.

We read, Rev. ii. 5, that the Lord threatens to remove the candlestick from the Ephesians except they amend. Now the candlestick is the church, chap. i. 20, and to remove the candlestick is to dischurch the assembly, or to wipe it out of the bead-roll of churches. Here is sin, the discharging of an assembly; but that the death of the officers should do it, is nowhere found. We will acknowledge the ministers to be the lights, stars, Matt. v. 14; Rev. i. 20, and candles in the candlestick of the church, and that the minister's death or fall is the removing of the light in a great measure, but we may not grant them to be the candlestick: that is the church, wherein they are set, as 1 Cor. xii. 28, which may stand still, though they fall.

Seventhly. If a company of saints, where no officers are, be not a true visible church, then may they have no visible communion together, either public or private; the reason is, because the communion of saints is an effect, or property of the church, and the church a cause of it: the invisible church, of invisible communion, and the visible church, of visible communion. And as we can have no fellowship with Christ in his merits, and other works of mediation, till we be in our persons joined unto him by faith, and grafted in him, as the "branches in the vine," John xv. 1, 2, 4: so neither can we have communion one with another in any spiritual grace, or work, till we be united one to another in love, as the members of the body under the head. Communion in works, whether natural, civil, or religious, doth necessarily presuppose union of persons. Yea, if such a company be not a church, I see

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not how their seed can have right to baptism, no, nor how their own baptism can be accounted true in the right ends and uses of it. For, first, baptism is within, and not without the church. Eph. iv. 4, 5. Secondly, It is the seal of the covenant, which is the form of the church to the faithful and their seed. Acts ii. 38, 39. Thirdly, It is of the members into the body of Christ. 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13.

Lastly, where the essential causes of a church are to be found; viz., matter and form, there is a church. But this may be in such assemblies as have no officers, *ergo*,

The former proposition is evident in itself, for the essential causes give being unto the thing, and it hath the being from them.

The second proposition I gather from Mr. B.'s own grant, where treating of the causes and properties of the church, he makes the "true matter such as profess Christ Jesus their only Saviour," p. 112: and the "form to be the uniting of men to God, and one to another visibly." p. 116. Now, except he will say, which God forbid, that none may make profession of faith, and be united to Christ without officers, he cannot deny but there may be, and so be called, a church without them. For all united unto Christ the head, are members of the body, which is the church: and so the whole assembly jointly considered is a whole and entire body and church. So that to deny an ordinary assembly or communion of Christians to be a Christian church, is an unchristian opinion. And here I entreat the indifferent reader to consider whether these men's ways be equal, or no. When we deny their assemblies to be true visible churches, though they consist for the most part of profane and ungodly persons, under the government of a provincial, or diocesan bishop, and the ministry of a dumb or profane priest, as the most do, (to which also the best is subject within one month,) they complain of us, as most injurious detractors, and yet will not they acknowledge any assembly of faithful and holy people only, if unfurnished for a time of officers, to be a true church, or capable of that denomination. Bet let not the hearts of God's servants be discouraged; he is no accepter of men's persons, he hath not tied his power and presence to any order, or office in the world, but accepted

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of them that fear him, and work righteousness, hating the assemblies of the wicked, and all their sacrifices.

Upon this point I have insisted the longer, partly because it is the ground of the other truths to be handled in their places, and partly in detestation of the unsufferable pride of this prelacy, and priesthood, which will have the very life of all churches to hang on the breath of their nostrils; yea, I may safely say, on their lusts; if they die, yea, or forsake their charges in never so fleshly respects, their churches are dissolved, at least during the vacancy, and so the brethren dismembered from being of the visible body of Christ. But so far are the officers from being the formal cause of the church, as is intended, as they are, in truth, no absolutely necessary appurtenance unto it. The power, indeed, to enjoy them is an essential property seated in the body which may branch out itself, as God gives fit means, into officers accordingly, which, if they prove unfruitful, it may also accordingly lop, or break off. And so far is the Holy Ghost from giving countenance to this opinion, that the officers make the church, as when he speaks distinctly of the body, and officers, and considers them severally, he calls the body the church, excluding the elders, as appears in these, amongst many other scriptures. Acts xiv. 23; xv. 4; xx. 17, 28; 1 Tim. iii. 5, 15. And the reason is, because the church is essentially in the saints, as the matter, subject, formed by the covenant, unto which the officers are but adjuncts, not making for the being, but for the well-being of the church, and furtherance of her faith, by their service.

The second point now comes to be manifested, which is that two or three faithful persons joined unto the Lord in the fellowship of the gospel, have immediate interest to Christ in all his ordinances.

Now, lest any should stumble at these words, "two or three joined or gathered together," as it seems Mr. B. would hereby take advantage to discountenance so small a number, it must be considered, that two or three thus gathered together have the same right with two or three hundred. Neither the smallness of the number, nor meanness of the persons, can prejudice their right. When the Lord did choose one nation from all other

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nations, he chose the smallest amongst them, "fewest in number." Deut. vii. 7; Psa. cv. 12. And though now Christ have opened a way for all nations, yet is it a narrow way and which few find, Matt. vii. 14, especially in the first planting or replanting of churches, of which Christ speaks most properly: in which regard also he likens the kingdom of heaven, or church, to a grain of mustard seed, which is the least of all seeds, Matt. xiii. 31, 32, but yet hath virtue in it to bring forth a tree, in whose boughs the birds of heaven may build their nests. And against this exception of discouragement Christ himself hath provided a comfortable remedy, in speaking expressly of two or three, Matt. xviii. 19, 20, to whom he hath given his power, and promised his presence.

I. Now, for the point itself: the truth whereof is sufficiently manifested by that which hath been formerly laid down. If a company of faithful people, though without officers, be the true church and body of Christ, and Israel of God, then to that company appertains the covenant of promise, the oracles of God are committed unto them, and to them are given his word, statutes, and judgments: and so they may freely enjoy them amongst themselves in the order by Christ prescribed, without any foreign ministers, for mediators. Rom. iii. 2; ix. 4; Psa. cxlvii. 19, 20; Acts ii. 39.

II. They that have received Christ have received the power of Christ, and his whole power, for Christ and his power are not divided, nor one part of his power from another.

But every company or communion of faithful people have received Christ, John i. 12; Rom. viii. 32; Isa. ix. 6, and with him power and right to enjoy him, (though all the world be against it,) in all the means, by which he doth communicate himself unto his church.

III. When the Scriptures would give us to understand the near union betwixt Christ and his church, and the free and full title which he hath given her in himself, and all his most rich and precious benefits, they do teach the same by resemblances of most strait and immediate conjunction, as of that between the vine and the branches, the head and the body, the husband and the wife; and so as

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the branches do receive and draw the sap and juice immediately from the vine, and as the body receiveth sense and motion from the head immediately, and as the wife hath immediate right to, and interest in her husband's both person and goods, for her use, though she may and ought to use the service of her husband's and own servants, as they can be had, for convenient purposes, so hath every true visible church of Christ direct, and immediate interest in, and title to Christ himself, and the whole New Testament, and every ordinance of it, without any unnatural, monstrous, and adulterous interposition by any person whatsoever, betwixt the vine and the branches, the head and the body, the husband and the wife: which are Christ, and his church, though but two or three gathered together in his name, as hath formerly been manifested. John xv. 1, 5; Eph. i. 22, 23; iv. 15, 16; v. 2, 3; Cant. iv. 8—10; Matt. xxii. 2, 3; Eph. v. 25, 29, 30; Rev. xxi. 2.

If all things be the church's, even the ministers themselves, yea, though they be Paul, Cephas, and Apollos, and the church Christ's, and Christ God's, then may the church use and enjoy all things immediately under Christ, and needs not go to Rome to fetch her power, whither Mr. B. would send her, but may have and enjoy the ministers and ministrations, as her own, of all the holy things which are given her. But the first, the apostle expressly affirms, 2 Cor. iii. 21—23, and so the conclusion necessarily followeth, which will also be more manifest in the particulars as they come to be handled in their places, as occasion shall be ministered by Mr. B.'s reasons laid down against "popularity," as he terms it, which in the next place come to be considered of.

The Popular Constitution of the Church.

The first and second whereof are, that it is "contrary to the order which God established before the law, under the law," and since Christ, or in the apostles' days; during all which times, he affirms, that the power of governing was in the chief; in the first-born before the law, in the Levites under the law, and in the apostles in their days. And for confirmation of these things, he brings sundry scriptures from the Old and New Testament, and for the

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exposition of them, and clearing of his assertion, intermingles sundry other observations.

For entrance into the answer of which his refutation, I desire it may be considered, that the visible church being a polity ecclesiastical, and the perfection of all polities, doth comprehend in it whatsoever is excellent in all other bodies political, as man being the perfection of all creatures, comprehends in his nature what is excellent in them all: having being with the elements, life with the plants, sense with the beasts, and with the angels reason. Now wise men having written of this subject, have approved as good and lawful, three kinds of polities; monarchical, where supreme authority is in the hands of one; aristocratical, when it is in the hands of some few select persons; and democratical, in the whole body, or multitude. And all these three forms have their places in the church of Christ. In respect of him the head, it is a monarchy, in respect of the eldership, an aristocracy, in respect of the body, a popular state.

The Lord Jesus is the king of his church alone, upon whose shoulders the government is, and unto whom all power is given in heaven and earth; yet hath he not received this power for himself alone, but doth communicate the same with his church, as the husband with the wife. Isa. ix. 6; Matt. xxviii. 18; 1 Tim. vi. 15. And as he is "anointed by God with the oil of gladness above his fellows," Psa. xlv. 6, 7; Heb. i. 9, so doth he communicate this anointing with his body, 2 Cor. i. 21; 1 John ii. 20; Gal. ii. 9, which being poured by the Father upon him, the head, runneth down to the skirts of the clothing, perfuming with the sweetness of the savour, every member of the body, and so makes every one of them severally kings and priests, and all jointly a kingly priesthood, or communion of kings, priests, and prophets. Rev. i. 6; Exod. xix. 9; 1 Peter ii. 6. And in this holy fellowship by virtue of this plenteous anointment, every one is made a king, priest, and prophet, not only to himself but to every other, yea to the whole. A prophet to teach, exhort, reprove, and comfort himself and the rest; a priest, to offer up spiritual sacrifices of prayer, praises, and thanksgiving, for himself and the rest; a king, to guide and govern in the

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ways of godliness, himself and the rest. But all these always in that order, and according to those special determinations which the Lord Jesus, the King of kings, hath prescribed. And, as there is not the meanest member of the body but hath received his drop or dram of this anointing, so is not the same to be despised, either by any other or by the whole, to which it is of use daily in some of the things before set down, and may be in all, or at least in the most of them. So that not only the eye, a special member, cannot say to the hand, a special member, I have no need of thee; but not the head, the principal member of all, unto the feet, the meanest members, I have no need of you. 1 Cor. xii. 21.

And yet as if a multitude of kings should assemble together, to advise and consult of their common affairs, some one or few must needs be appointed over the assembly, both for order and special assistance of the whole, which should go before the rest in propounding, discussing, and determining of all matters, so in this royal assembly, the church of Christ, though all be kings, yet some both most faithful and most able, are to be set over the rest; and that in office, not kingly but ministerial, because the assembly is constant, wherein they are both deeply charged and effectually encouraged to minister according to the testament of Christ, and that not only for comeliness and order, as Mr. B., page 90, slandereth us to hold; but for the profit, edification, yea and salvation of the church, 2 Cor. i. 24; Eph. iv. 11—13; 1 Tim. iv. 16, by the ministration of such holy things as to the church appertain, by the free, absolute, and immediate donation of Christ.

This premised, I come to Mr. B.'s reasons and refutation.

And, first, I do freely acknowledge the thing which he would charge us to deny, and seem to prove by many scriptures: and that is, that "the government of the church before the law, under the law, and in the apostles' times," was, and so still is, not in the multitude but in the chief. In the first-born before the law, in the Levites under the law, in the apostles in their times, and so in the ordinary officers of the church ever since, and that the Lord Jesus hath given to his church a presbytery,

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or college of elders or bishops, for the feeding of the same, Acts xiv. 23; xx. 17—20, that is, for the teaching and governing of the whole flock according to his will; and these the multitude jointly and severally is bound to obey, all and every one of them, "submitting themselves unto their government in the Lord." 1 Thess. v. 12; Heb. xiii. 17. And this it never came into our hearts to deny. Cease, then, Mr. B., to suggest against us, unto such as are ignorant of our faith and walking, that we deny the officers to be the governors of the church, or the people to be governed by them. But this I desire the reader here to take knowledge of, and ever hereafter to bear in mind, that it is one thing for the officers to govern the church, which we grant, and another thing for them to be the church, which Mr. B., in expounding Matt. xviii. would needs make them; where he would have the officers alone to admonish and censure. As if because "the watchman is set up to blow the trumpet, and to warn the people when the sword cometh," Ezek. xxxiii. 2, 3, that therefore he alone is the city, or land, and bound alone to make resistance. The officers of the church are to govern every action of the church, and exercise of the communion; are they therefore alone to do all things? They, if there be any of them in the church, are to govern in every election and choice of ensuing officers: are they therefore alone to choose, excluding the church? They are to govern in preaching, prophesying, and hearing the word, and receiving the sacraments, singing of psalms, distributing unto the necessities of the saints: are they therefore alone to prophesy, to sing psalms, to contribute to the poor, and the rest? With as little reason can it be affirmed, that they alone are to have communion in the censures, to admonish, and judge, because they are to govern in the carrying and administering of those matters.

These things thus cleared, it will be very convenient for the purpose in hand, and will give much furtherance to the truth, in a few words to consider of the nature of ecclesiastical government, and governors, which whilst politic men, through either ignorance or contempt of the gospel's simplicity, do neglect; they labour to transform the church into a worldly kingdom, and to set over it a kind

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of kingly and lordly government; and such scriptures as give liberty and power unto kings, and other civil officers over their subjects and people, for the making and altering of laws, and for the passing and ordering of judgments, these they pervert and misapply to church governors and government, than which nothing is more monstrous. Matt. xx. 25—28; 1 Peter v. 3.

Analogies.

1. For, first, civil officers are, and are called in the Word of God, princes, heads, captains, judges, magistrates, nobles, lords, kings: them in authority, principalities, powers, yea, in their respect, gods; and according to their names, so are their offices: but on the contrary, ecclesiastical officers are not capable of these or the like titles, which can neither be given without flattery unto them, nor received by them without arrogancy; neither is their office an office of lordship, sovereignty, or authority, but of labour and service, and so they the labourers and servants of the church, as of God. Num. vii. 2; Deut. i. 15, 16; Matt. xx. 25; Rom. xiii. 1—3; 1 Tim. ii. 2; Titus iii. 1; Psa. lxxxii. 1—6; 1 Tim. iii. 1; Acts i. 17; 1 Tim. v. 17, 18; Matt. xx. 26, 27; 2 Cor. iv. 5.

2. Magistrates may publish and execute their own laws in their own names, Ezra i. 1, 2, &c.; Esther viii. 8; Matt. xx. 25. But ministers are only interpreters of the laws of God, and must look for no further respect at the hands of any to the things they speak, than as they manifest the same to be the commandments of the Lord. 1 Cor. xiv. 37.

3. Civil administrations, and their forms of government may be, and ofttimes are, altered for the avoiding of inconveniences, according to the circumstances of time, place, and persons, Exod. xviii. 13—17, &c. But the church is a "kingdom which cannot be shaken," Heb. xii. 28, wherein may be no innovation in office, or form of administration from that which Christ hath left, for any inconvenience whatsoever.

4. Civil magistrates have authority, by their offices, to judge offenders, upon whom they may also execute bodily vengeance, using their people as their servants, and ministers for the same purpose; but in the church, the officers are the ministers of the people, whose service the

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people is to use for the administering and executing of their judgments, that is, for the pronouncing of the judgments of the church, and of God first, against the obstinate, which is the utmost execution the church can perform. And what difference can be greater? In the commonwealth the people, fewer or more, yea sometimes whole armies, the ministers of the officers; in the church, the officers the ministers of the people.

5. In civil government, obedience must be performed for the authority and will of the commander, who is lord over the bodies and goods of his subjects, Matt. xx. 25, 26; 1 Pet. v. 3, yea though his commandments bring with them bodily damage, yea be they never so unjust and unholy, yet must obedience be given in meek and patient sufferance, though not in active performance, 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14; iii. 14—16, but in church matters not so. The officers may neither exact obedience, nor the people perform it further than the goodness, profit, and edification of and by the thing commanded doth enforce, 1 Cor. xiv. 26; Gal. i. 8; Col. ii. 16, 18.

And the reason is because civil magistrates have authority annexed to their office, and order; and though both they and their commandments be most unjust, yet do they still retain their authority, which their subjects may not shake off: but ministers and church governors have no such authority tied to their office, but merely to the Word of God.

And, as the people's obedience stands not in making the elders their lords, sovereigns, and judges, but in listening to their godly counsels, in following their wise directions, in receiving their holy instructions, exhortations, consolations, and admonitions, and in using their faithful service and ministry, so neither stands the elders' government in erecting any tribunal, seat, or throne of judgment over the people, but in exhorting, instructing, comforting, and improving them by the Word of God, 1 Tim. iii. 15, 16, and in affording the Lord and them their best service.

But here it will be demanded of me, if the elders be not set over the church for her guidance, and government? yes certainly, as the physician is set over the body, for his skill and faithfulness, to minister unto it, to whom the patient,

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yea though his lord, or master, is to submit: the lawyer over his cause, to attend unto it; the steward over his family, even his wife and children, to make provision for them: yea the watchmen over the whole city for the safe keeping thereof. Such, and none other, is the elders' or bishops' government.

Scripture Proofs.

Now to conclude this point. All the scriptures which Mr. B. brings, as the reader may see, serves to prove that the governors of the church must be in and of the church they govern: but the governors of the church of Worksop are not of it, neither would Mr. B., I dare say, be well pleased they should. But where it is further affirmed, that "during all the apostles' days, the body of the congregation attempted nothing of themselves, but that always church matters were begun, governed, and composed by the apostles," as it made nothing against our matter, though it were even so, as is said, since we hold that where there are officers in the churches, and those faithful in all things, as the apostles were, there things are not to be attempted without them, so is it not true which is affirmed, neither do the scriptures alleged prove any such thing.

The three first places, Acts i. 15; 23—25; vi. 3, 6; xiv. 21—23, do only prove that the apostles being general men, and officers of all churches, did when they were present with the churches govern and assist them faithfully in all things, which we also affirm to be the duty of all elders in their particular charges, whom the people are accordingly to obey. More particularly. The two former places speak of the church at Jerusalem, where some of the apostles were ever present: what marvel then if the congregation attempted nothing without them? But touching the last scripture which speaks of the churches of and amongst the Gentiles, and of the ordination of elders there, Acts xiv. 23, the case is otherwise. Of these churches some were converted to the Lord by the apostles, and other, by private brethren scattered thither, and there publishing the gospel, Acts viii. 12; x. 36—44, 47, 48; xi. 19—23; xiii. 2, 12, 48; xiv. 1, 2, and that, some certain years before any ordination of elders amongst them.

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And can it be conceived with any reason, that all this long space, during the apostles' absence, these churches never assembled together for their edification and comfort, in prayer, prophesying, and other ordinances? Were there no other converted all the while which desired to be admitted into their fellowship? or had they no use of excommunication for the preserving pure of their communion for sundry years? But to let pass these more general things and to come to the special business mentioned, Acts xiv. 23. The same rules which were after left in writing to Timothy and Titus for the choice of bishops or elders, were then in use amongst the churches: and amongst other qualifications, it was required of them that they should be apt to teach, 1 Tim. iii. 2, 4, 5, able to convince, Tit. i, 5, 7, 9, as also to manage the public affairs of the churches, which were to depend on them, whether in cases of controversy, or otherwise, and such they both then were, and now are by good trial and experience to be known to be: and those also no young plants, 1 Tim. iii. 6, for such fruits. And as it did most specially concern the brethren to know certainly, and by good experience, that those officers were so qualified, whom they were to set over them, and unto whom they were to commit their souls to be fed unto life eternal, so could they only take sufficient trial of them, their gifts, and faithfulness for the public ministry by due experience. The apostles came but occasionally to visit the churches, and to comfort them, making (in many, very small or no continuance) and finding fit men for officers in the churches where they came, and the same known, testified and commended to be such by the people's election, they ordained bishops or elders over them, and so departed. Acts xiv. 21—23.

And what reason can be given, why the apostles did not at the first planting of the churches, but so long a space after, ordain officers, as also that Paul did not perform that business himself in Crete, but left Titus the evangelist for that purpose, Tit. i. 5, save only that men of gifts might be trained up in prayer, prophesying, and carrying of such other church affairs as fell out, and so due trial made of their gifts, and good knowledge taken of their faithfulness in and by the churches whereof they were, and

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over which they were to be set, being found fit for that service? Now the fourth scripture, which is 1 Cor. v., doth directly oppose that for which it is brought. It was the church's fault not to have purged out that sour leaven, the incestuous person, before they either heard from Paul, or he, of that evil amongst them: and for their negligence herein the apostle reproveth them, as all men see that are not willingly blind. And for Paul, he, in general, as a penman of the Holy Ghost wrote scriptures for the direction of the Corinthians and all other churches to the world's end, and, in special, as a chief officer of that church, by determining for himself discharged his own duty, ver. 3: but did neither begin, govern, or compose the action being at Philippi, or rather at Ephesus for the present, from whence he wrote the epistle to the church, unto which he commended the business in hand, both for the beginning, and ending of it.

But what of all these, and many other the like scriptures to be alleged? Because the churches are in all things to be guided by their officers ministering faithfully, and according to the Word of God, and their duty, that therefore if either there be no officers, or if they be absent, or fail in their duty, the church may do nothing either for information or reformation?

The Scriptures record, that after Stephen's death "all the church at Jerusalem was dispersed, save the apostles, and that they which were dispersed went to and fro, preaching the Word," the effect of whose preaching amongst the Gentiles was "the faith and conversion of a great number unto the Lord." Acts viii. 1—4; xi. 20, 21.

Here were not only church matters, but even churches begun, preaching to and fro, turning and joining of multitudes to the Lord, and that, where neither apostles nor other officers were present, for this is too gross to affirm, that during all the apostles' days nothing was begun but by them. And what if the Lord should now raise up a company of faithful men and women in Barbary, or America, by the reading of the Scriptures, or by the writings, conferences, or sufferings of some godly men, must they not separate themselves from the filthiness of the heathen to the Lord? nor turn from idols to the true God? nor

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join themselves unto him in the fellowship of the gospel? nor have any communion together for their mutual edification and comfort, till some vagrant priest from Rome or England be sent unto them to begin their church matters with his service book? And yet this would not serve the turn neither, for he would be unto them a barbarian, and they barbarians unto him, 1 Cor. xiv. 11. Some years must be spent, ere each could understand other's language. Nay if this were a true ground, that church matters might not be begun without officers, it were impossible that such a people should ever either enjoy officers, or become a church, yea I may safely add, that ever there should be in the world, after the universal visible apostasy of Antichrist, either any true church, or officers; and so we must hold with the Arians, that except there should come new apostles to gather the churches, and so a new Christ to call those apostles, that there can be to the world's end neither true churches nor true officers. The reason is, because "no man takes this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God as Aaron." Heb. v. 4. Now God calls no man ordinarily but by the church; for I suppose you will not deny but that the choice of officers is a church matter, and not a matter of the world. And the church must choose none but such as of whose knowledge, zeal, and utterance they have taken trial by the exercise of his gifts, as you truly affirm, elsewhere in this book, page 138, and you will not say but this exercise of his gifts after this manner and for this end is a church matter. Whence it followeth, that both church matters, yea and churches also, may and in cases must be begun without officers. Yea, even where officers are, if they fail in their duties, the people may enterprise matters needful, howsoever you will have the minister the only *primum movens*, and will tie all to his fingers. And to let pass the godly kings of Judah which were no church officers, about whom the question is, which sundry times set the priests a-work, and other with them in church matters, as 2 Chron. xvii. 7—9; xxix. 1—5, &c., and other instances in the Old Testament, which in the handling of the particulars will fall into consideration, Peter himself was called by such as were no apostles or other officers, to render a reason of his going in to men

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uncircumcised, which he also did to God's glory, and the church's satisfaction Acts xi 2, 3, 18. Now howsoever they which so contended with him erred in the matter, and it is like, dealt too contumeliously with him in the manner, yet had it been simply unlawful for them to have propounded and begun a matter of that kind, Peter would have reproved and broken off their disorderly course, and not have partaken with them in their sin, by undertaking the answer of the matter, which in the general he doth approve, by his orderly and satisfactory answer.

Furthermore, where the Lord Jesus, Matt. xviii. 19, directs a brother in case, and order, to tell the church of his brother's offence, what can be more plain than that he enjoins a private brother to begin a church matter? Yea though there be elders in the church, yea though the elders alone, yea the chief of them only, as Mr. Bernard would have it, be the church, yet must the matter be brought to, and begun in the church by him that is offended, and his witnesses. To press this yet a little further: if any publicly scandalous or notorious sin be committed in the church by a brother, and the elders neglect all means of redressing it, yea put the case, the elders themselves be in the transgression, and by name, that they preach heresy, or both preach and practise notorious idolatry, and that the body of the church also be corrupted by them, and join hands with them in their mischief, what now must a private brother do in this case, whose heart the Lord establisheth in the truth, and whom he plucks as a brand out of the fire? Must he go on, and join with that idolatrous assembly in their wickedness? God forbid. And leave them he may not, till he have dealt with them about this church matter, and convinced them of this church sin: for if Christ would not have a brother cast off his brother till he have dealt with him, nor the whole church to cast off a private member, till he refuse to hear it, Matt. xviii., much less will he have one brother to forsake all the brethren, and officers also, or a private member to disclaim the whole church, till he have by the best means he can afford in himself, or procure otherwise, and after the best manner, convinced, admonished and exhorted both the officers and people, and so found them obstinate and irreclaimable.

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To proceed. The apostle Paul writes to the church at Rome, to observe such as caused divisions, and scandals, contrary to the doctrine they had learned, and to avoid them: and to the church at Corinth, to deliver to Satan, or excommunicate the incestuous person, and again that upon his repentance they would forgive him, and confirm their love towards him, and again to the same church, that they would have ready their collection for the saints at Jerusalem and gather it on the Lord's-day, desiring further that they might abound in that grace, as in faith, love, and the like: to the Colossians that they should say to Archippus, Look to thy ministry which thou hast received of the Lord, that thou fulfil it: so writes John to the church at Pergamos that they should not suffer the Balaamites and Nicolaitanes to teach and to deceive, as they did: and to the church of Thyatira likewise not to suffer the woman Jezebel, calling herself a prophetess, to deceive God's servants. Rom. xvi. 17; 1 Cor. v. 1, 4, 5; 2 Cor. ii. 7, 8; 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2; 2 Cor. viii. 7; Col. iv. 17; Rev. ii. 14, 15, 20.

Now it seems by Mr. Bernard's doctrine that if the officers withdraw in these things, and will not endeavour the reformation of them, or if they die or fall away, that the silly multitude must bear all evil, and forbear all good; they must not mark and avoid heretical and schismatical whether teachers or others, they must not put out the old leaven, that they may become a new lump: nor confirm their love to any penitent person, or forgive him, though his repentance be never so full or public: nor make any collection in the church for their brethren the saints, nor have any part in that grace: nor put their minister in mind of his office that he fulfil it: nor meddle with false prophets for their conviction or restraint, but may suffer them to deceive without gainsaying; these are all church matters; apostles only, and apostolic men must meddle in them, both to begin and end them. And thus the church, without the officers' help, though it cannot possibly be had, as a deaf, a dumb, a blind, a lame, yea a lifeless and senseless body: it must both have the eyes put out, and the ears stopped, and neither see nor hear; it must be tongue-tied from speaking, and fast bound hand and foot from doing anything for the general, and joint good, yea it must

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not be saved without the officers, for other ordinary way of salvation know I none by the revealed will of God in his Word, but in the use of the ordinances, which Christ hath given unto his church.

It is the steward's duty to make provision for the family, but what if he neglects this duty in the master's absence? Must the whole family starve, yea and the wife also? or is not some other of the family best able, to be employed for the present necessity? It is the pilot's office to guide the ship, but what if he ignorantly, or negligently, or desperately will run the same upon the rocks, or sands, must the rest of the mariners forbear to intermeddle, and so perish? It is the captain's office to lead the army, but what if he or they perfidiously will betray the same into the hands of the enemy, may not the body of the army make the best head they can to defend themselves, and to offend their enemies, using the best means they have for their present direction? Yea, even in the most peaceable and best governed commonwealths, a private man may in a case of necessity become a magistrate for a main work, and that which ordinarily is the magistrate's peculiar. The Lord hath given the sword into his hand for the good of him that doth well, and to take vengeance on him that doth evil, Rom. xiii. 3, 4, and to him it appertains to defend the innocent. But if this innocent person be assaulted by a thief, murderer or other enemy, when the magistrate is absent that should defend him, God puts the sword into his hand, and he may as lawfully use it now, as wear it before, and rather kill than be killed.

So may the church as the wife of Christ, if the steward, the minister, neglect the provision, use the help and service of another the fittest in the family to provide food; the multitude, as the mariners, if the minister, the pilot be desperate, set another the most skilful at the stern: the body of the army of the church, if the officers, as the captains, be perfidious, use the help and guidance of some other the most expert: so may, as a private citizen, a magistrate, a private member become a minister, for an action of necessity to be performed, by the consent of the rest. These first things even nature, and the light of it teacheth the natural man; the latter, grace, and the Spirit of grace

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the spiritual man. Of these things the more largely I have spoken in the general, I may be the briefer in the particulars. Only for conclusion I must demand of Mr. B. this question: If church matters be to be performed only by ministers, why his sexton,* being no minister, reads divine service in his absence, and that by authority from the ordinary. If this be not a church matter, and that material, there is small church matter in the most churches in the land.

Now the last thing I have to observe touching this first reason, is, that so far as the author speaks the truth in it, so far he speaks most plainly against himself. In that he grants, as he doth, page 90, 91, the people under the law aright from the Lord, to approve of the appointment of the Levites; and that the body of the congregation were made acquainted with that which concerned them, yea and had liberty to choose their officers, and to present them to the apostles, therein he overthrows both his own, and all other the ministries in England, as by the laws both civil and ecclesiastical they are constituted. For the law, with you, Mr. B., allows not only ministers ordained at large, without any certain congregations, but entitles them also to their special cures, without so much as the people's knowledge: many parishes never seeing the faces of their ministers till they come to ring their bells in sign of victory: much less doth the law provide, they should be approved, least of all that they should be chosen, and presented by them.

As the truth you speak in this place makes against you, so had you spoken more fully, you had brought more clear testimony against yourself; you do therefore take up yourself in time, and mingle some untruths among, like darkness with light, lest the light should shine too clearly in the eyes of the reader.

Where you then affirm, that the people did only approve of the Levites at the Lord's appointment when they took their charge, Numb. iii. 6. 12.; Lev. viii. 2, 36; and that the body of the congregation was only made acquainted with the choice of Matthias, Acts i. 15, you speak unfaithfully: but where you add, that only the liberty was

* Or, probably, "parish clerk," by special license, or, under sanction of Canon 49 of the Church of England. Vide p. 129, *supra*.

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granted them by the apostles then to choose officers, &c., it is both false and fond. False, as the former, for the Levites were not only approved by the people, but given by them: they were the people's gift, and therefore theirs, for they gave nothing but their own, and by them given to minister unto the Lord instead of the first-born, Exod. xiii. 2, 12, 13, and xxii. 29; Numb. iii. 12. The Levites are expressly called the people's shake offering, Numb. viii. 9, 10, 11; and so were not only approved, but given by them as their offering, even the offering of the whole congregation, and that by solemn ordination and imposition of hands by the people. Men may approve the things done by others, but the people were principal doers themselves: the offering was theirs, and by them as their gift presented, and so by Aaron offered unto the Lord in their name.

And as shameless an untruth is it, which you avouch, touching the calling of Matthias, Acts i., that the body of the congregation was only made acquainted with that which concerned them all. For howsoever the ministration were extraordinary, being an apostleship, to which he was called, and therefore the Lord reserved to himself the prerogative royal of immediate designation of the very person, Gal. i. 1, yet would he have the liberty of the people so inviolably preserved, as that by direction, they were to present two, and after to acknowledge, by common consent, that particular person which by the Lord was immediately singled out, and designed to that work. Verses 23, 26.

Lastly, the liberty granted to the people for the choosing both of deacons and elders, Acts vi. and xiv., was not by any courtesy of the apostles, as by the pope's indulgence for that time, as Mr. B. would cunningly bear the simple reader in hand, but it was an ordinance eternal, and perpetual, never reversed but by Antichrist, even a part of that counsel of God wherewith the apostles acquainted the churches, and one of these commandments which they were to teach all churches to observe, which they also did.

And so I come to the third reason against this imputed popularity, taken from the commission of Christ to his apostles and their successors.

This is something generally set down, but the thing, I

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perceive by his proofs, which Mr. B. intends is, that the use of the keys and power of binding and loosing was committed by Christ to his apostles, and to those which succeeded them.

And first here, I do grant with Mr. Bernard, that look to whom the power of binding and loosing was primarily and immediately committed, in their successors it resideth for ever: so that the only point in question is, into whose hands the Lord Jesus hath properly and immediately given the keys of the kingdom of heaven, the power of loosing and binding sins.

For the better understanding then of this point it must be considered, that the kingdom of heaven is compared to a great house into which some are admitted, and others denied entrance: the door into this house is Christ: the key that opens and shuts this door, is the gospel: the opening of it, which is the loosing of sins, is the publishing, opening, manifesting, and making known of the gracious promises of the forgiveness of sins, and life eternal to such as believe and repent. The shutting of this door, which is also the binding of sins, is the declaration and denunciation of the wrath of God against sin, and of condemnation upon persons impenitent, and unbelievers: and both these according to the pleasure of the Master of the house, though the latter of them be not of the nature of the gospel, which is in itself "the ministry of life, and of the Spirit which giveth life," 2 Cor. iii. 6, but accidental unto it, by men's own fault, which through their unbelieving and impenitent hearts turn this key, as it were, the wrong way upon themselves.

Now by the evidence of the former general truth approved, I doubt not, to the conscience of every indifferent man, which is, that a company of faithful people united together in the fellowship of the gospel, though without officers, is a church. This specialty in hand will be cleared. And wheresoever the promise of forgiveness of sins, and life eternal is to be found, there hangeth the golden key of heaven's gates, there sins are loosed in heaven: for what else is it to loose sins, but to publish, proclaim, or declare in the Word of God and righteousness of Christ, the forgiveness of sins to them that repent? But of these things hereafter.

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I will in the first place consider of Mr. Bernard's proofs, and of his collections from them.

The places alleged are, Matt. xxviii. 19, and xvi. 19; John xx. 21—23; Mark xiii. 34, which scriptures are not all of one nature, nor serving to the same end. Yet this, in general, I do answer to all of them, that we deny not but that the public ministers are by commission from Christ to publish the gospel, administer the sacraments, bind and loose sins, watch and ward the house of God, and the like, which for us to deny were wickedness, and for you to prove is lost labour. But the points in controversy betwixt us are, first, whether these things and all of them, and with them all other church affairs not here mentioned, be so appropriated to the officers, as that none other may meddle with them: and second, whether this power be committed to them immediately from, and by Christ, or mediately from Christ by the church: which consideration whilst you neglect, you err yourself, deceive such as follow you, and injure them you oppose. But to the particulars.

The first and third scriptures, Matt. xxviii. 19, and John xx. 21—23, are meant only of the apostles; and in them they receive the commission apostolic, which, to speak properly, is incommunicable to any other officer in the church. For as none are to succeed them in the office of apostles, so neither is the commission, peculiar to the apostles, conveyed, or intended to any others, which also further appears thus.

Their charge was to "teach and baptize all nations," Matt. xxviii. 19, and to "go into all the world, and to preach the gospel to every creature," Mark xvi. 15: but ordinary ministers have no such commission, but are tied to their particular flocks. Acts xiv. 23; xx 28.

Secondly, their commission was extraordinary, and miraculous, whether we respect the inward qualifications of the parties by the immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost, wherewith they were at the first sprinkled as it were, John xx. 22, and afterward replenished, Acts ii. 4, or whether we respect the miraculous confirmation of the doctrine both by them that taught it, and by them that believed it. Mark xvi. 17, 18, 20.

Thirdly, the very outward order and manner of conveying it was extraordinary, and by Christ's immediate voice,

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and as it were with his own hands: where ordinary ministers have their commissions from Christ indeed, but by men. Gal. i. 1. And the consideration of this very difference doth minister sufficient matter of answer, that though Christ did transfer unto the apostles their office, and power to exercise it immediately, yet for ordinary ministers, the case is clean otherwise.

Lastly, the disciples of Christ did not then first receive power to teach, when they were possessed of their apostleship, but long before they were admitted into office, as did others also besides them without office as well as they, Matt. x. 5—7; Luke x. 1—3, 9, 10, which scriptures alone, as they are sufficient to justify against Mr. B. that the keys of the kingdom were given into the hands of men without office, yea before any office or officer was in the church, so do they manifest the notable falsehood of that his peremptory affirmation, page 93, that "it is as plain as the shining of the sun of the firmament of heaven, to such as are not blind, or wilfully shut not their eyes from seeing, that Christ never said to the body of the congregation," that is, to any out of office, for that is the point, "Go preach."

The apostles, by Mr. B.'s own grant in this place, and by these scriptures, and at this time, and not before, had their commission of apostleship granted them from Christ, and I hope he will not say they entered their office without a commission, and yet both power and charge were given them long before to preach the kingdom of God, as the forequoted scriptures manifest.

The next place is Matt. xvi. 19, where express mention is made of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and of the power of binding and loosing given to Peter: by which scripture rightly interpreted I desire the difference betwixt Mr. Bernard and me may be determined.

That by the keys is meant the gospel of Christ, opening a way by him, and his merits, as the door into the kingdom, I have formerly declared, and we must take heed of that deep delusion of antichrist, in imagining that this power of binding or loosing sins, of opening or shutting heaven's gates, is tied to any office, or order in the church; it depends only upon Christ, who alone properly forgiveth sins, and hath the key of David which opens, and no man

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shuts; and shuts, and no man opens, Mark ii. 7; Rev. iii. 7: and this key externally is the gospel, which with himself he gives to his church, Isa. ix. 6; Rom. iii. 2; ix. 4, and not to the officers only for them, as Mr. Bernard in his last book,* page 178, come to mine hand in the publishing of this mine answer, doth insinuate, because the material book was given into the hands of the priests and elders to be kept, Deut. xxxi. 9, whence I do by the way gather thus much, that since the keys of the kingdom of heaven is the gospel, and that the gospel is given to the whole church, and to every member of it, whether there be ministers or no, it therefore followeth, that the keys are given to all and every member alike, as the gospel is, though not to be used alike by all and every one, which were gross confusion, but according to the order prescribed by Christ.

Now for the place in hand, which is Matt. xvi. 18, 19, it is granted by all sides that Christ gave unto Peter the keys of the kingdom, that is, the power to remit and retain sins declaratively, as they speak, as also that in what respect this power was given to Peter, in the same respect it was and is given to such as succeed Peter: but the question is, in what respect or consideration this power spoken of was delegated unto him. The papist affirms it was given to Peter, as the prince of the apostles, and so to the bishops of Rome as Peter's successors, and thus they establish the pope's primacy: the prelates say, nay, but unto Peter an apostle, that is, a chief officer of the church, and so to us, as chief officers succeeding him, which is also Mr. B.'s judgment, page 94. Others affirm it to belong to Peter here as a minister of the word and sacraments and the like, and so consequently to belong to all other ministers of the gospel equally, which succeed Peter in those and the like administrations. But we for our parts do believe and profess that this promise is not made to Peter in any of these forenamed respects, nor to any office, order, estate, dignity, or degree in the church, or world, but to the confession of faith, which Peter made by way of answer to

* "Plain Evidences:" the Church of England is Apostolical and the Separation Schismatical: Directed against Mr. Ainsworth and Mr. Smyth, &c. 4to. 1610.

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Christ's question, who demanding of the disciples, ver. 15, whom, amongst the variety of opinions that went of him, ver. 14, they thought him to be, was answered by Peter in the name of the rest, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God," ver. 16. To this Christ replies, ver. 17, "Blessed art thou, Simon, the son of Jonas," &c.; and ver. 18, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not overcome it; and ver. 19, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

So that the building of the church is upon the rock of Peter's confession, that is, Christ, whom he confessed: this faith is the foundation of the church: against this faith the gates of hell shall not prevail: this faith hath the keys of the kingdom of heaven: what this faith shall loose or bind on earth, is bound and loosed in heaven. And thus the Protestant divines, when they deal against the Pope's supremacy, do generally expound this scripture, though Mr. B. directly makes the pope and his shavelings, Peter's successors in this place, as hereafter will appear. Now upon the former ground it followeth, that whatsoever person hath received the same precious faith with Peter, as all the faithful have, 2 Pet. i. 1, that person hath a part in this gift of Christ: whosoever doth confess, publish, manifest, or make known Jesus to be that Christ the Son of the living God, and Saviour of the world, that person opens heaven's gate, looseth sin, and partakes with Peter in the use of the keys.

And hereupon also it followeth necessarily, that one faithful man, yea, or woman either, may as truly and effectually loose and bind, both in heaven and earth, as all the ministers in the world.

But here I know the lordly clergy, like the bulls of Bashan, will roar loud upon me, as speaking things intolerably derogatory to the dignity of priesthood, and it may be some others also, either through ignorance, or superstition, will take offence at this speech, as confounding all things: but there is no such cause of exception. For howsoever the keys be one and the same in nature,

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and efficacy, in what faithful man's or men's hands soever, as not depending either upon the number or excellency of any persons, but upon Christ alone, yet is it ever to be remembered, that the order and manner of using them is very different.

These keys in doctrine may be turned as well upon them, which are without the church, as upon them which are within, and their sins either loosed or bound, Matt. xxviii. 19, but in discipline, as we speak, not so, but only upon them which are within. 1 Cor. v. 12, 13. Again the apostles by their office had these keys to use in all churches, yea in all nations upon earth: ordinary elders for their particular flocks. Acts xiv. 23; xx. 28.

Lastly, there is an use of these keys publicly to be had, and an use privately: an use of them by one person severally, and an use of them by the whole church jointly, and together: an use of them ministerially, or in office, and an use of them out of office: but the power of the gospel, which is the keys, is still one and the same, notwithstanding the divers manner of using it.

And this distinction well observed will stop the hole, by which Mr. Bernard in his reply, sundry times escapes out, where otherwise he should be unavoidably taken in Mr. Smyth's arguments, by taking advantage at, and perverting of a phrase used by Mr. S., which is the ministerial power of Christ. This ministerial power Mr. S. makes that external communicated, and delegated power of Christ with and to the church, serving only for manifestation and declaration of the remission, or retention of sins, opposing ministerial power in the creature, to that power essential and incommunicable which is inherent in Christ and God the Creator: but Mr. B. on the other side, either ignorantly or deceitfully misinterprets the term ministerial, as meant only of the power in office, opposed to that which is out of office, and so creeps out at this cranny. But with what reason can it be either conceived or suggested that Mr. Smyth should affirm, that the body of the church, or a private brother out of office, should have this power spoken of in office? Thus much to prove that all the precious promises, Matt. xvi., were made to Peter in respect of his confession of faith, and so conse-

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quently to all others, which succeed him in the same confession, and amongst the rest, the use of the keys, though not in the same order or office with Peter, which was peculiar unto him with some few others. It followeth:

1. If the keys of the kingdom of heaven be appropriated unto the officers, then can there be no forgiveness of sins, nor salvation without officers: for there is no entrance into heaven but by the door, there is no climbing over any other way; without the key the door cannot be opened: so then belike if either there be no officers in the church, as it may easily come to pass in some extreme plague, or persecution, howsoever in England a man may have a priest for the whistling, and must needs be in the churches of Christ in our days either in their first planting, or first calling out of Babylon: for antichrist's mass-priesthood is not essentially Christ's true ministry, or if the officers take away the key of knowledge, as the scribes and pharisees did, and will neither enter in themselves, nor suffer them that would, Matt. xxiii. 13, then must the miserable multitude be content to be shut out, and perish eternally, for aught is known to the contrary. They have no remedy in this case, no redress may be had of this evil, no means used to avoid it. Though the pope carry with him thousands to hell, no man may say unto him, Sir, why do you so? To admonish the officers of their sin, (it were against common sense as that the father should be subject to his children, the work domineer over the workman, the seedsman be ordered by the corn;) and to excommunicate them and call new, were intolerable usurpation of the keys, this power is given to the chief officers only, pp. 94, 95, and to separate from them is as intolerable, p. 88! Miserable were the Lord's people if these things were so! but the truth is they are miserable guides that so teach.

2. They which may forgive sins and sinners, save souls, gain, and turn men unto the Lord, to them are the keys of the kingdom given, by which they open the door unto such as they thus forgive, gain, and save: but all these things such as are no ministers may do, as these scriptures, which I entreat the godly reader to consider, do most clearly manifest, Matt. xviii. 15; 2 Cor. ii. 5, 7—10;

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Acts viii. 1, 4, with xi. 19, 20, 21; James v. 19, 20; 1 Pet. iii. 1; Jude 22, 23. Erroneous, therefore, and derogatory is it to the nature of the gospel, and free donation of Christ, thus to impropriate and engross the keys, which lie common to all Christians in their place and order.

3. Lastly I do affirm, with Mr. Smyth, that the twelve were as yet but disciples, and not actually apostles. Designed indeed they were to the office of apostles, but not possessed of it. A man may call such a woman his wife, before they be actually married, and such a child his heir, though he be not for the present possessed of a foot of his inheritance, nor like to be before the testator's death: and that this was the condition of the twelve, I prove by these reasons:

If the twelve were called to the office of apostles, Matt. xvi., then Christ called men to an office for which they were altogether unfit and unfurnished, which to imagine were impious against Christ.

Now that they were utterly unapt to this office, appears in these particulars:

First, they wanted that Christian fortitude, and courage, which was most needful for that office.

Secondly, they were ignorant of the nature of Christ's kingdom, not forecasting his death, not believing his resurrection, unfurnished also with the gift of tongues, and so, utterly unable to teach the Gentiles, for whose sake they received their commission in a special manner, Matt. xvi. 21, 22; xx. 20, 21; xxvi. 51; Mark xvi. 11, 14; Luke xxiv. 21; Acts ii. 1—4; Matt. xxviii. 19; Eph. iii. 5, 6.

When Christ ascended on high he gave gifts to men, viz. apostles, evangelists, &c., Eph. iv. 8, 11. And then, and not before then, was the church capable of the office of apostles, who were to preach the gospel to all nations, when the partition wall was broken down betwixt the Jews and Gentiles, that the Gentiles also which were formerly strangers and foreigners, might now be made citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. Eph. ii. 12, 19.

And as this particular I have now in hand, seemeth to receive confirmation from the last scripture, Mr. Bernard bringeth for the apostles' commission, which is Mark

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xiii. 34, where Christ at his departing into a strange country sets his house in order, gives his servants authority and appoints them their work, so doth the exposition and application of the same scripture to the general purpose, if we compare with this place that which he affirmeth in another, argue him that brings it of a mind very unsound and unstable.

Here, as all men see, Mr. B. allegeth it to prove that the chief officers only are by commission from Christ to meddle in the public affairs of the church, and in particular to redress things amiss, and to censure offenders: but in his second book,* being pressed by an argument by Mr. Smyth taken from this scripture, he fairly and flatly denies, "that the Lord in this place intends to set out any government of the church at all:" and thus compared with himself, he is like nothing less than himself.

Now since Mr. B. disclaims this scripture as not intended at all of the government of the church, and that, in his second and better thoughts, I have no reason to spend much time in answering him. Only I cannot pass by one frivolous exception, in his reply, against Mr. S., and another absurd collection of his own. Where Mr. Smyth affirms, that every servant or disciple in the church hath authority, (and that truly if he have the word of God, he hath authority, for the word carries authority with it wheresoever it goes,) Mr. B. excepts first, that by servants are meant officers: which as it is true sometimes, so is it otherwise for the most part, especially in the parables of this kind, Matt. xxv. 14; Luke xix. 12, 13, to which this parable seemeth well to consort; wherein since all have received some good thing, or substance from Christ, to be dispensed for the good of the rest, all should diligently and faithfully employ their labour in the same, ever expecting the return of the Master; and all and every one of them watching, and the porter especially, according to that special charge laid upon him to watch, ver. 34, 35, 37; but the exception I mean is, that by servants cannot be meant the church, because the house is the church, and the authority not given to the house, but to the servants in the house, who are to look over others. Mark here, in the case

* "Plain Evidences."

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of government, the house must needs be the church, the church and house are both one, and Christ speaking of the house or church, means the people, excluding the officers: and yet, Matt. xviii., in the case of government, the officers are in Christ's speech, the church or house, (for they are all one,) excluding the people. But to the point, as the officers are both the Lord's servants in his house, Rom. i. 1; Heb. iii. 5, and parts of the house and household also, Heb. iii. 6; 1 Pet. ii. 5; Gal. vi. 10; Eph. ii. 19; so are the people not only the house, or of the house and household, as in the forenamed scriptures, but the Lord's servants in his house also. Matt. xxv. 14; Luke xix. 12, 13; Rom. vi. 16, 22; Rev. i. 1; vii. 3.

The idle and senseless exposition Mr. B. gives, is of the porter's watching. Where the Master at his departure appoints every servant his work, and commands all to watch, and the porter specially, lest he come suddenly and find them sleeping, Mr. B., to join all together for the holding out of Mr. Smyth's argument, makes the porter God's Spirit, as if the Holy Ghost were one of the servants, and had a commandment from Christ to watch, lest it should be found asleep at his coming. And by this, I hope it appeareth in the general, contrary to Mr. B.'s affirmation, that the power of Christ, or keys of the kingdom, is not delegated or committed primarily, much less solitarily or alone, to the officers of the church, howsoever they as the governors are to direct, and as the ministers to execute in the use of this power, or of these keys. Of the particulars hereafter.

Apostolic Succession.

That which comes next into consideration is, that "the Apostles committed that their power received from Christ not to the body of the people, but to the chief ministers of the gospel, and chief officers of the church."

First, here let the reader observe how Mr. B. interests these chieftains only in the power of Christ, as the apostles' successors, excluding himself and the rest of his rank, that he may advance the throne of antichrist in his chief ministers, the lord archbishops and bishops, whose chair he thus stoutly labours to uphold with both shoulders.

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Secondly, I deny, that either the evangelists, such as were Timothy and Titus, succeeded the apostles in their office, or that any other ministers in the church did or do succeed either the apostles, or evangelists, as they were such, as we speak. They were extraordinary officers in the first planting of the faith amongst the Gentiles, their qualifications extraordinary and miraculous, as the gift of tongues, and the like, and so their offices were determined in their persons. And yet I deny not but the true ministers of the gospel, the bishops or elders, in their particular churches do succeed the apostles, though not in office, yet in their ordinary ministration of the word, sacraments, censures, prayer, ordination, and all other ordinances of the church whatsoever, according to the order Christ hath left; but that the apostles and evangelists have, by any order, committed their power or any part of it to any such chief ministers or rather lords, yea spiritual tyrants as the lord-bishops and archbishops in England are, that I deny with all my power. There are no such chieftains in the church of Christ, or communion of saints. The apostles did, by the church's free choice, ordain in every particular assembly a company of elders or bishops, whom they charged with the particular flocks, in and to which they were to minister the holy things of God, and none other. Acts xiv. 23; xx. 17, 28; 1 Tim. iii. 1, 2, 4; Tit. i. 5; 1 Pet. v. 1, 2. Much less are the great antichrists of Rome, the popes and cardinals, the apostles' and evangelists' successors in any right by the Word of God, or capable in that their estate of apostolical or other ministerial power of Christ, as you, Mr. B., will make them, of which your popish error more in place.

Now for the scriptures cited, they serve well to prove that which no man denies, in which kind of disputing Mr. B. hath a special faculty.

The scriptures are, 1 Tim. i. 3, and iii. 14, 15, and v. 21, 22; Tit. i. 5; which places prove thus much in effect, that Timothy was to see false doctrine suppressed in Ephesus; that men gifted according to the Word of God should be chosen into the office of bishops and deacons: that he should deal impartially in all things: that he should not partake in the sins of other men by laying

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hands suddenly upon any: and that Titus was left in Crete to redress things amiss, and to ordain elders in the churches.

And what follows upon this? I know well what Mr. B. infers: namely, that the chief ministers alone in the churches, whether pure or impure, by which latter he means the Church of Rome, as he expounds himself, p. 145; that is, that popes, cardinals, archbishops, bishops, suffragans, chancellors, and the rest of the triumphant clergy, and they alone, should meddle with suppressing error, rectifying things amiss, calling and ordaining ministers, and that all others are absolutely inhibited any meddling with these things. Well, to let pass your fearful retiring, Mr. B., into the battered bulwarks of the papists for succour, and the discharging of yourself, and all the inferior ministry, that these chief ministers might reign alone, the Scriptures do not debar the members of the church from meddling in those things in their place, and order, nor impropriate them to the chief lords, as is pretended; only they declare, that the officers are to do their own duties in those businesses, and to put the brethren in remembrance of theirs, to command, teach, and speak those things, exhorting and rebuking with all authority by the Word of God as occasion serves. 1 Tim. iv. 6, 11; Tit. ii. 15. And if Mr. B. will conclude anything for his purpose by the Scriptures he allegeth, he must take this position for granted, that whatsoever Paul writes to Timothy, or Titus, touching the church, about that only, they and their successors the chief ministers are to meddle, which presumptuous affirmation is sufficiently refuted by the very recital of it. He that reads over the Epistles but with a piece of an eye may see the contrary. There is no greater force in this collection than in that, Mark xiii. 34, because the porter is to watch, therefore he alone, and not the rest also, which is contrary to the express words immediately following, where all are commanded to watch, ver. 37. And thus the conclusion, which Mr. B. would make, that the place, 1 Cor. v., though generally spoken, must be understood of the chief officers of the church, is without premises. It must be understood as it is spoken, though both he and the pope say nay to it, and of the meaning of it, we shall speak hereafter at large.

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when we come to handle the censures of the church, as also of your pretended proof. 2 Cor. ii. 6.

Only I must needs take knowledge of that part of the truth, which Mr. B. being set upon the rack of his conscience in reading this, 1 Cor. v., is compelled to confess; and that is, that from ver. 5 it may be gathered for the body of the church, that the offender must be delivered to Satan with their knowledge publicly, when they meet together in the open assembly.

Touching which his grant I observe these three particulars:

First. It overthrows the practice in the Church of England, where the offender is excommunicated by the chancellor, or official, it may be, forty miles off from the body of the congregation whereof he is a member, and that, most-what, without the presence of any one of the body, yea or their privity either, till such times as either the parish priest or church door signify the matter unto them.

Second. If the officers must judge, and excommunicate in the open assembly, then can they alone in no sense be the church. For the church, ἐκκλησία, is nothing but the assembly. And it is all one to say the officers in the assembly, are the church, as to say the officers in the assembly, are the assembly: which is a senseless affirmation. And if the officers alone be the church, to which complaint is to be made, and which is to reprove the offender and judge him, they must do it in a distinct assembly from the body, and not in the assembly compounded necessarily of the officers and the body: as your court-keepers do in their consistories, and the elders in the reformed churhes in their private chambers.

Third. It is most untrue which you say, that no more can be gathered from this place, but that excommunication was performed in the presence of the body of the church, and with their knowledge, being gathered together: it is apparent that they which were gathered together, were by the power of Christ to deliver to Satan the offender, to purge out the old leaven, to judge, and to put out from among themselves that wicked fornicator; ver. 5—7, 12, 13, of which more hereafter.

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Spiritual Gifts.

And so I come to the fourth reason against popularity (as you term it), but in truth against Christian liberty; which is grounded upon Eph. iv. 11, 12. Your words are these:

"It is most apparent that Christ ascending up gave gifts for preaching, administration of sacraments, and government unto some sorts of men, who are set out there and plainly distinguished from the other saints, the body of the church." p. 92.

Against this, hitherto, I take no great exception: though the apostle's meaning may be better laid down thus, that Christ Jesus, the King and Lord of his church, hath set in it certain sorts and orders of officers, rightly fitted, and furnished with graces for the reparation* of the saints, and edification of his body to the world's end.

This we affirm as loud as you, and with more comfort. And, therefore, after I have observed in a few words, how little this scripture serves for your present purpose, I will in as few more make it appear, how directly it serves against you in many other main matters, and that you in bringing it have only lighted a candle whereby to discover your own nakedness.

This, then, is that which you would conclude, that because Christ hath given power and charge to the sorts of ministers here set down for the reparation of the saints, and edification of the body, that therefore no brethren out of office may meddle with the reparation and edification of the saints, or church.

I do acknowledge that only apostles, prophets, &c. by office, and as works of their ministry, are to look to the reparation and edification of the body: but that the brethren out of office, are discharged of those duties, I deny, any more than the rest of the servants were of watching, though out of office, because the porter alone was by office to watch. Mark xiii. 34, 37. Yea look what is laid upon the officers in this place, after a more special manner, by virtue of their office, that, also, is laid upon the rest of the brethren elsewhere in the same words to be performed in

* "Perfecting" the character.

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their places as a duty of love, for which they have not only liberty but charge from the Lord.

The officers are here charged with the reparation or knitting together of the saints: the same duty, καταρτίζετε, Gal. vi. 1, in the same words is imposed upon every brother spiritual, and I hope you the ministers will not be the only spiritual men in the church.

Secondly, the officers are here given to edify the body: the same duty in the same terms is laid upon every one of the brethren in their places, 1 Thess. v. 11, and unto these few might be added a hundred places of the same nature. Why then should the ministers of the Lord, or any other, for their sake envy unto the Lord's people either their graces or liberty, Numb. xi. 29; 1 Kings xxii. 24, or thus arrogate all unto themselves, as though all knowledge were treasured up in their breasts, all power given into their hands, and as though no drop of grace for edification or comfort of the church could fall from elsewhere than from their lips? Moses, in the place of Numbers beforenamed wished that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them: and Paul gives liberty to the whole church, and to all in it, 1 Cor. xiv. 3, 23, 31, 36, (women excepted, ver. 34,) to prophesy one by one for the instruction, edification and comfort of all: but with Mr. B. and his church, I perceive, neither Moses' prayer, nor Paul's grant, nor God's Spirit must be available, or find acceptance for edification by any save the ministers. The subjects of kings used to complain much of monopolies, but the subjects of the Lord Jesus have greater cause of complaint, that he himself, his power, presence, and graces wherewith he honoureth all his saints, are thus monopolized and ingrossed.

The similitude which here you borrow from the body of man, wherein, you say, the special members have their special virtues in themselves given of God and not bestowed upon them by the body, as the eyes to see, the tongue to speak, &c. for the confirmation of the power of the Lord Jesus, or liberty to teach, admonish, and censure in the hands of the officers alone, is faulty in both parts of it, and contains in it sundry errors, both theological and philosophical.

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And, first, I do here most justly except against your shuffling together and confounding of the personal gifts, graces, and virtues of the ministers, and their ministerial power or office. The first, indeed, they have from Christ, and not from or by the church at all, as their knowledge, zeal, utterance, wisdom, holiness, and the like: with which the church finds them furnished, and so appoints them under Christ to use these gifts in office of ministry, whereof out of office they have erst given knowledge; and this power or appointment, which they have from or by the church thus to use these gifts is another thing than their personal gifts and qualifications themselves, which you, Mr. B., do very fraudulently confound.

Secondly, it is ignorantly affirmed, that God endues certain members of the body with special virtues and properties, as the eye with seeing, and the like: and that they have these properties not from the body but from God. For, first, the very virtue or faculty of seeing, is not in the eye, but in the soul, which useth the eye only for the instrument of seeing, and so other parts in their kind. *Oculus non videt, sed anima per oculum.* And that not immediately neither, but with the help of the spirits, natural, vital, and animal, diffused throughout the body, which the soul useth most immediately as the instruments of all life, sense, and motion. And so it comes to pass not only in death, where the soul and body are separated, but in sundry diseases also of the body, that the eye faileth in seeing, and so other members in their service.

Thirdly, as the elders of the church, I confess, may be compared to eyes in the body, and the deacons to hands, in a respect, so I deny the similitude to hold absolutely. Similitudes, as they say, do not run upon four feet: and to strain them above that which is intended by the Holy Ghost in using them, is a course full both of vanity and error. The deacons are the hands of the church for the distribution of her bodily things to them that need, and yet I trow, you would not have the church suffer the poor to starve, where the deacons are wanting to minister, or failing in their ministration: so are the elders, the eyes and mouth of the church for her government, and ministration of spiritual things, and yet must not the church

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perish spiritually for their want, or negligence: no, the Lord is more merciful to his people than so, and doth not tie them so short in the means of their edification and salvation, how strait and hard-hearted soever you, Mr. B., are towards them, or contemptuous of them: they may, and must use in cases of necessity their best helps, for the distribution of things simply necessary to the body. And dare you say, as you have done in both your books, that the officers are absolutely to the church, as the eyes to the body? and that there is no spiritual light in the rest of the members save only in them? and that all the body besides and without them is darkness? Indeed such a blind beetle, your spiritual lords and you make your churches, and so you lead them. But, oh you people of God, yet in Babylon, partakers of the heavenly illumination, trust not these your seers too much! They will be thought all eye from top to bottom, and would make you believe, that you the multitude are stone blind, and cannot possibly without them see one step before you, that so they might lead you by the lip, whither they list: but open your eyes more and more, and you shall see more and more clearly that the ways of your national church, are not the ways which Christ hath left for his visible churches to walk in, but a very by-path: and take heed that these men, who would be thought all and only light, cause not a fog of earthly ordinances to rise upon you, and a dark mist to cover you.

To proceed. This one scripture, Eph. iv. 11, 12, truly expounded, and according to the apostle's meaning, serves at one blow to overthrow the whole ministry of your Church of England, and all communion with it.

Your whole plea for your ministry is, that you teach the Word of God, and the true Word of God, and therewith you invite all your guests unto your banquet. But now if your ministry be not the ministry which Christ hath set up in his church, nor of the gifts which he hath given unto his church, but of another sort and foundation, then it follows that no fellowship or communion is to be had with it under any plausible pretence, nor upon any experimental profit neither.

The officers, then, which Christ hath given for the edifi-

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cation of his church to the world's end, are, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. Eph. iv. 11, 12. Now the first three sorts of these above-named were extraordinary, and extraordinarily endued, for the first publishing of faith, and planting of churches, and so as temporary are ceased, with their endowments, and this you grant in effect, p. 184 of your last book.* And for the pastors and teachers here spoken of, you, Mr. B., and the ministers of your order would be thought the men. Of what sort then, I pray you, are your grand metropolitans, your archbishops, bishops, suffragans, deans, archdeacons, chancellors, officials, and the residue of that lordly clergy? They must needs be of some other order than is here named, and the gifts of some other chief lord than of Christ, when he ascended on high, and gave his gifts, and that is antichrist, whose gifts they were when he ascended on high, even to the throne of his apostasy.

And now for you which are set over the particular parishes to teach the people, as I confess you of all the rest to be likest unto the true pastors, so by your own confession are you excluded from that rank. The officers which Christ hath appointed, when he ascended, have received power, by your own assertion, not only for preaching and administering the sacraments, but for government also, page 92. The want then of the power of government bewrayeth you to be another's gift than Christ's, even his and none other's which hath devised another order and distribution of gifts, than ever came into Christ's heart to appoint.

Lastly, as it is true you affirm, that Christ never said to the body of the congregation, viz., in express terms, Go preach, so is it most untrue which you intend, viz., that he never gave liberty and charge to any out of office to teach in the exercise of prophecy. This point I have touched formerly, but will more fully handle hereafter. The same I also affirm, in the second place, touching the power of government not opposing your words well interpreted, but your meaning, which is, that none but men in office have

* "Plain Evidences," &c., frequently referred to in subsequent parts of Mr. Robinson's work, under the title "The Second Book," or "last book."

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power, either to reform any abuse in the church or to perform any other necessary church duty without them. And for shutting up of this fourth argument, let it be considered, that here is a great difference in administration of doctrine by teaching, and of admonition and excommunication in the order of discipline. Only one man in the church doth teach at once, and all the rest both elders and people are taught by him, but the whole church may admonish, or excommunicate one or more at once, or by one act: and so though Christ never said to the church, Go teach, yet, he saith to the church, Admonish, and excommunicate. Matt. xviii. 17; 1 Cor. v. 4, 5. In doctrine, one man teacheth the whole church, and the whole church is taught: in discipline, the whole church reproveth and excommunicateth one man, and him censureth.

And thus your light, Mr. B., which you boast is as clear as the sun in the firmament of heaven, is darkened: your sun is gone down at noon-day. Amos viii. 9.

Church Officers Censured.

The fifth reason is thus laid down:

"It is never to be found in all the Old Testament that the people, but princes and ecclesiastical governors, men in authority, were reproved for suffering holy things to be abused. Ezek. xxii. 26; 1 Sam. ii. 27; 1 Kings xiii. So in the New Testament, Matt. xxiii.; Rev. ii. 1—8; xii. 18, and iii. 1, 7, 14, no mention in these places is made of the people."

It seems Mr. B. hath learnt of them which give counsel to affirm all things peremptorily, under hope to find some men with whom a confident affirmation will go as far as a modest proof.

But here, as always, I do except against, as a corner-stone of Babylon, your unequal yoking of ecclesiastical officers and ministers in the government of the church, with princes and magistrates in their civil authority: there is no proportion betwixt them. A lion and an ox will pair better than these two kinds of governors and governments. Neither can it be rightly said of church officers that they are men in authority: they are men in service and charge,

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whether we respect God, or the church. 2 Chron. xxxv. 3; Numb. xvi. 9; Rom. xvi. 21; 2 Cor. iv. 5. They have power, I grant, for they have the gospel to preach and minister, which is the power of God to salvation: they are to speak with authority, and that also in the order of office, and by special commission. Rom. i. 16; 1 Cor. iii. 4, 5; Tit. ii. 15. And so the evangelists testify of Christ, that he "taught as having authority, and not as the scribes;" Matt. vii. 28, 29; Mark i. 22; the reason was that where the manner of teaching amongst the scribes was very corrupt, and degenerate, affecting the people's hearts with no reverence of God, Christ on the contrary did manifest in his teaching such virtue and vigour of the Spirit, as did draw even the profane hearers into admiration. There are, indeed, in the commonwealth kings, and magistrates in authority under them, partakers of their kingly power by subordination, by which participation they properly and effectually, even as the king himself, bind and loose, save and destroy, exact and procure obedience civilly both in church and commonwealth, and that by a kingly and lordly power over the people, whose kings, lords, and masters they are: but the officers in the church are in no such authority by participation of Christ's kingly power, neither can they properly and effectually bind and loose, save and destroy, exact and procure obedience, as Christ doth: neither are they, as civil magistrates, though the king's servants and ministers, yet the people's lords and masters, but both Christ's and the people's servants and ministers.

Now let any judge that hath in him either religion or reason, conscience or common sense, if it be not irreligious, unconscionable, unreasonable, and senseless that the body of the church should have no more liberty and power in the employments of their servants and ministers in their office, than the body of the commonwealth in the employments of their lords and masters in their office. To this also I may add, that there are many civil ordinances and constitutions in the commonwealth which concern not one of a thousand of the king's people, many magistrates and officers chosen, the inferior by the superior, without the people's privity or consent, many administrations used, judgments passed, and executions done, which the greatest

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part of the people do not, nor are bound, so much as once to inquire after: much less are they bound to complain of the breach of every civil ordinance, to see it reformed, to charge every magistrate to look to his office, to admonish him if in anything he deal corruptly, or wickedly, and if he will not be reclaimed, but go obstinately on, in the spirit of an heretic, idolater, or atheist, to disclaim or depose him: but in the church, all and every ordinance concerns every person, as a part of their communion, without the dispensation of necessity, for their use, and edification: all the officers to be chosen by suffrages and consent of the multitude: the brethren are to admonish their brethren of every violation of God's commandment, and so in order to tell the church, and to see the parties reformed: to observe and to take notice of the officers' carriage and ministration, and to say to Archippus, as there is need, "Take heed to thy ministry that thou hast received of the Lord, that thou fulfil it:" and if the ministers will deal corruptly, and so persevere in the spirit of profaneness, heresy, idolatry, or atheism, to censure, depose, reject, or avoid them; otherwise they betray their own souls, and salvation. 1 Cor. iii. 22; xiv. 26; Acts i. 15, 23, 26; vi. 1, 2, 3, 5; xiv. 23; xv. 2, 3; 2 Cor. viii. 19—23; Matt. xviii. 15, 17, 18; Col. iv. 17; Matt. xviii. 17; Rom. xvi. 17, 18; Gal. v. 12; 1 Tim. vi. 3—5; 2 Tim. iii. 1—5; Tit. iii. 10, 11.

These things I thought good upon this occasion further to annex, touching the difference and dissimilitude of civil and ecclesiastical governors and government, not doubting for conclusion to affirm, that there is no one error in popery serving more directly to advance antichrist to the highest step of his throne, or there to establish him, than thus to confound these two estates in their authority, and manner of government; though, alas! too many will need transform ministers into magistrates, servants into lords: and as "the kings of the earth have given their power and authority unto the beast, and arrayed the great whore that sitteth upon the beast with purple, and scarlet, and gilded her with gold, precious stones, and pearls, Rev. xvii. 3, 4, 13, so do they still help her to hold her kingly and lordly authority, and to bear up her pompous train, and that, specially, by enforcing those scriptures for ecclesiastical government, and

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the manner and order of it, which were left for direction in civil governments, and their administrations.

And yet for more special answer unto you, Mr. Bernard, it follows not that, because the people are not interested in the reformation of abuses by the scriptures you cite, therefore it is never found, either in the Old or New Testament, that any such duty lies upon them. The Scriptures do not intend to speak of all things at once, but that charge which is omitted in one place, is ofttimes supplied, and prescribed in another. And to this purpose, I do desire that these few scriptures amongst many others may be considered of: Numb. v. 1, 2; Josh. vii. 1, 11, 12, 24, 25; xxii. 11, 12, 16—18, 20; Judg. xx. 11, 12; 2 Sam. xx. 22; Ezek. xliv. 5—7, 9; Luke xvii. 3, 4; Gal. vi. 1; 1 Thess. v. 14; 1 Cor. v., whole chapter; and all these, and many other of the same nature will manifest, that the people are charged with the reformation of abuses for the keeping pure of their communion, as well as the officers, though not in the same order or degree. But what need we seek further? as all the scriptures brought forth by Mr. Bernard do charge the governors with reformation, and none of them exempt the people, in their rank and order; so are there some of them so pregnant against him in the point, and by which he hath been so oft silenced to his face, that, if he had not set himself in opposition, without all measure, or modesty, he would never offer his cause to be tried by that evidence in writing, by which in speech he hath been so oft cast and convinced.

The scriptures I especially mean are Rev. ii. and iii. And the thing which he would prove from those scriptures is, that, because John in the verses named by him, speaks to the angels of the particular churches, that therefore it concerns the angels, that is, the chief officers alone, and no way the people, no, nor any of the officers but one in a church by Mr. Bernard's exposition, to see to the reformation of such abuses, and disorders, as in those churches are reproved. But if in these scriptures he thus sever, and sejoin* the officers and people, why might not the officers be excluded, by as good consequence, by other verses of these chapters, where mention is made of the churches,

* Separate.

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and not of the angels, as the people in these, where the angels only, and not the people are mentioned? and both alike. The answer, and truth then is, that John writes and sends these epistles or this book, to the seven churches in Asia, Rev. i. 11, as he is expressly directed by Christ: and so willeth all men to hear, and take knowledge what the Spirit saith to the churches; chap. ii. 7, 11, 17, 29; iii. 6, 13, 22: but because the matters were public, and he absent from the churches, it was both most convenient and necessary he should direct his letters to the officers for the whole churches, as being not only most fit for their knowledge, but most bound by their places to provoke the churches unto, and to direct and go before them in the reformation of such evils as were found amongst them. As, if the king at any time write his letters to any corporation in the land about some such public business as wherein every freeman hath a hand, he directs them to the mayor, bailiff, or some other chief officer, by whom they are to be published to the whole body, and the matter managed, which they contain, though, as I formerly said, every freeman be to speak to, and consent in the business.

And here it is too much Mr. B. should say, as he doth, that no mention in these places of the Revelation is made of the people, but of the governors only, where Christ expressly enjoins John to write his vision, and to send it unto the seven churches, ver. 11; where John expressly salutes them with grace and peace, as Paul and others do them to whom they write in the beginning of their letters, ver. 4. Where he also calls those candlesticks he saw in his vision, the churches, though distinguished from the officers, or angels whom he calls stars, or lights, ver. 12, 13, 20; and lastly and specially, where after his both commendations and reproofs, promises and threatenings, he wills men to listen what the Spirit saith not of, but unto the churches. Ch. ii. 7, 11, 17, 29, and iii. 6, 13, 22, which do necessarily include the people in them.

But to let pass generals, and to come to such particulars in these chapters, as wherein the suffering of evils in the churches is reproved. Only I must needs show Mr. B. his great oversight, that, where he should prove, that only the

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angels of the churches were reproved for suffering evils unreformed, he points us to sundry angels, and churches, where there is no mention at all made of suffering evils, but all of doing, as well by the angels, as churches; as in Ephesus, Sardis, and Laodicea: and which is worse, unto other angels, and churches, where there were no evils at all worthy reproof either done or suffered: as in Smyrna and Philadelphia. And is not this sound dealing? The Lord Jesus finds nothing in the churches of Smyrna and Philadelphia worthy of taxation, but all of commendation; *ergo*, the chief governors only in these churches are reproved for suffering evils unreformed. I now come to the particular scriptures in number two, where mention is made of evils suffered unreformed, and reproof laid upon them which suffered them in the two churches of Pergamos and Thyatira.

And that John directs his reproofs against the churches, and not against the officers alone, I do thus manifest:

1. Them, whose works Christ commends, for that dwelling where Satan's throne was, they kept his name, and denied not his faith, &c., them I say he reproves, and against them he deals, for suffering them that maintain the doctrine of Balaam, and of the Nicolaitanes, ver. 13, 14—16.

2. They which are commended by Christ for their works, love, service, faith, patience, and increase in works, they are also reproved by him for suffering the woman Jezebel, the false prophetess, to teach and to deceive. ver. 19, 20.

But it were senseless to affirm, that the angel alone, and not the people with him, was commended for dwelling where Satan's throne was, keeping Christ's name, and not denying his faith in persecution; that the angel alone was commended for his works, love, service, faith, patience, and the like; and as senseless, as to affirm, that only "some" of the angel of the church of Smyrna was to be cast into prison, ver. 10, and therefore, as the faithful, the brethren, the saints, the people, had their portion in these Christian virtues, and in the commendations given unto them, so also do they bear their part in the reproofs due to the toleration of such evils as were found amongst them, and are exhorted to repentance. ver. 16.

And this the two adversative conjunctions, but and

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notwithstanding, or nevertheless, ver. 14, 20, do evidently declare. In many graces these churches did abound, and faithful they were in great trials, but, or notwithstanding in this they failed, that they were not zealous enough against such deceivers as crept in amongst them, but suffered them, to others' hurt, and their own danger also. ver. 24.

Of these things I have spoken something the more at large, to discover the bold injury which Mr. B. offereth unto these scriptures: which may also serve to manifest both the liberty and duty of the people for the reforming of abuses in the churches, against the usurpation of the English or other clergy whatsoever.

Now to that which is inferred by way of conclusion, "that 1 Cor. v. must be expounded by other places, and by the whole course of Scripture," and the like, and that "tell the church," Matt. xviii. 17, must be understood, "tell the chief officers of the church;" these severals must be answered.

First, let it always be remembered, that we believe, and confess that the elders which Christ hath left in his church, are to govern the same in all things, provided always the nature of ecclesiastical government be not exceeded, according to the laws by him prescribed, and that so doing, the brethren are most straitly bound to obey them, without disturbance, intrusion, or opposition, under pain of God's wrath for their rebellion against him and them. Heb. xiii. 17. But as elsewhere is observed, it is one thing to be the church, another thing to govern the church; one thing for the officers to direct, and go before the brethren in all things as guides, and another matter utterly to exclude the brethren from any part of the communion, as neither being the church, nor any part of it, as this exposition doth.

These things Mr. B. ignorantly blunders together, and so he and others raise odious clamours against us of anabaptism, popularity, and the like, as if we confounded all persons and things, and made the church a very chaos, or Babel, without form or order.

Second, I acknowledge that one scripture must be expounded by another, but ever the more dark and obscure,

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by that which is more plain and lightsome: now so plain, clear, evident, and perspicuous are the two scriptures in hand for excommunication, the former Matt. xviii. 15—17, for the order and degrees of proceeding, the other 1 Cor. v. for the persons interested in the business, as that to bring in other scriptures for the expounding of them, is in truth as needless, and lost a labour, as to light, for the sun and moon, a candle.

Tell the Church.

Now for the places, severally, and first for Matt. xviii. 17, where, saith Mr. B., tell the church, is, tell the chief officers of the church: and so must be expounded.

Well, the words are clear as the sun, "tell the church," that is, the congregation or assembly whereof the offender is a member. But where you make the church, not the officers simply, but the chief officers, therein you deal both wisely and dutifully. Wisely, to let pass other respects, in preventing a question, which otherwise you could not possibly answer; for if you had said the officers simply, it would have demanded of you where your and your fellow-ministers' power of excommunication had been: dutifully, and as an obedient child in giving the rod of discipline into the hands of your reverend fathers alone, and their substitutes. Well, Mr. B., whomsoever the Lord Jesus meant by the church, Matt. xviii., he never meant, that the Archbishop of York, the Archdeacon of Nottingham, the official of Southwell, were the church of Worksop: and for this I will spare all arguments, and send you to your own guilty conscience for conviction, which as it condemns you in yourself, which is also the case of many thousands in the land, so do I earnestly wish both you and them to remember with fear and trembling the condemnation of him that is greater than your conscience. 1 John iii. 20. So far are they from being the church of Worksop, as they are not so much as members of it, nor of any other particular church in the kingdom: they are neither the pastors, so called, nor under the pastors of any particular church, but with their transcendent jurisdiction in their provincial and diocesan churches, take their scope without orb or order: and as

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clouds without rain, carried about with the wind of ambition and covetousness for the greatest part.

To leave them, and come to your reasons, Mr. B., by which you would prove, that "tell the church," is tell the governors. But here behold the fruits of an unstable mind. This man in his former book laboured by many scriptures and reasons, to lay down the nature of the church's government, and in special to prove, that the church, Matt. xviii. 17, to which complaint of sins was to be made, was the chief officers only, and this he affirms also to be the judgment, and the practice of all reformed churches, page 98. But lo! now in his second book, pages 211, 212, he devours the hallowed thing, and labours with all his power to persuade young divines, and silly country people, as he speaks, (and as in truth they had need be both young and silly that are persuaded by him) that the points of discipline and church government are not so apparent by the Scriptures, as that they can rightly judge of them. And to this end, he brings in the variety of judgments, and contradictions of learned men, some holding no government at all, others that an external government is to be had, but of these, some holding it alterable, others constant and perpetual, and of these some to be in the pope, and cardinals; others in the body of the congregation; some in the presbytery, with the people's consent; and others, which he puts last, as best, and for which he brings sundry reasons, referring the reader to the treatises written to that end in the bishops, his lords. And again, touching the punishment of offenders, some he brings in holding excommunication, but not suspension; some holding both, and some neither. And particularly for Matt. xviii., he musters in thick and threefold reasons and persons so reasoning, and proving, that the place, and so of Lev. xix. 17, doth nothing at all concern discipline, or ecclesiastical censures, but that Christ's meaning there was only to direct the Jews how to carry things before the Sanhedrim, in cases of bodily injury. And thus he brings men's contrary opinions to darken the Scriptures, which are most plain, like so many foul feet to trouble the pure fountains of living water, that the thirsty may not drink of them. And as a learned man in our age, and nation, to

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discover the vanity of prognosticators, gathered together their contrary guesses of the weather, and so presented them: so this man to make the government of Christ's church as uncertain as an almanac, sets together, and so offers to the view of the world the contrarieties of opinions concerning it. Now if other men should take this course Mr. B. doth, in other points of religion, and one lay down the differences that are about predestination and the points depending upon it, some utterly denying it, others affirming it, and of these some grounding it upon God's mere grace, others upon man's faith or works foreseen: another about baptism, some denying it to all infants, others ministering it to all, others to such only as are of Christian parents in a sort, and others only to them that are of believing parents, at the least on the one side: a third about the Lord's supper, in which point some hold transubstantiation, others consubstantiation, others only a sacramental union, which some also will have merely rational, others real also: there could not be a plainer way beaten for all atheism to come into the world by, nor a course devised by the devil more pregnant to persuade the multitude, that there were no certainty nor soundness in the Scriptures. But let God have the glory of his truth, and of the clearness in it, and let men bear the just blame, and shame of their natural blindness: and in special let Christ have the honour of being as faithful in his own house, as Moses was in his master's, Heb. lii. 5, 6, in setting orders and officers in it, and let not vile flesh dare to flatter princes and prelates, to mislead silly souls, and to preach liberty and licentiousness to the world, make Christ Jesus an idol king, having a kingdom upon earth without laws, or officers, for the administering of it; nor to make his redeemed, idol subjects, as whom it concerns little or nothing, whether they be under Christ's laws, and officers, or under Antichrist's, his professed adversary. Now though I will not trouble myself and the reader about every stone that Mr. B. idly casts in the way, yet such as may stumble the weakest passenger, I will remove, and so return to my former task.

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Superior Authority of Bishops.

And in the first place I will answer certain reasons in number six, brought by Mr. B. for the superiority of his lord-bishops: but those not backed with the Scriptures, as in other points, when he thinks he speaks the truth, his manner is.

The first is taken from the succession of James at Jerusalem, of Peter at Antioch, of Peter and Paul at Rome, and of Mark at Alexandria.

I answer, first, that these were not bishops set over certain churches, here and there, though upon occasion they tarried some good space in some certain churches, but general men, apostles, and evangelists, without successors in their offices; and so the Protestants do generally answer the Papists instancing them, as you do now.

Second. I deny the very apostles used any such lordly and papal authority, as to exclude either the inferior officers or people in church affairs: the contrary is most evident in the choice of officers, Acts i. 15, 23, 26; vi. 1—3, 5, censuring of offenders, 1 Cor. v., and debating of other church matters. Acts xv. 2—4, 6, 7, 22, 23, 30; xxi. 22.

The second argument is taken from 1 Cor. xii. 28, where, say you, three degrees are reckoned up, the first of apostles, the second of prophets, the third of teachers. But since the two former orders, which are apostles and prophets, are ceased as being temporary, how can there be superiority in the third, which is but one?

Your third and fourth arguments you draw from the superiority ordained by God in the Old Testament, amongst ecclesiastical persons: and the consequence of this argument you prove two ways: first, because this order is not forbidden in the New Testament: second, because the ground of superiority is alike in the New Testament as in the Old, which is to preserve order.

But do you not consider, Mr. Bernard, that the Old Testament, or law, is abrogated and disannulled, as having the shadow of good things to come? Heb. viii. 13; x. 1.; and so every order, and ordinance in it, which is

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not plainly renewed by Christ in the New? And where you seem to make the chief priests besides the high priest, a superior order to the other formally differing, it is more, if I be not deceived, than can be proved by the Word of God. I know no diversity of administrations amongst them, but that any of the priests might in their course and order offer sacrifice, and perform other the most solemn duties of priesthood.

But where you further add that only the high priest did type out Christ, and not the other priests so, Heb. vii. 11, you are much mistaken. The whole priesthood of Aaron, under which the law was established, Heb. x. 1, was a type of Christ's priesthood, though the high priests in a special manner, and their sacrifices, of his: and being a part of the law, which was a shadow or first draught, σκιά, whereof the gospel is the lively portraiture, εἰκών, it must needs be ceremonial, and so a type: and to affirm otherwise is a gross Jewish error. Lastly, as I grant one end of the subordination of ministries to have been the preserving of order, so I deny, that the same order is to be preserved in the New Testament, and in the Old. The order of the Old Testament was the order of a national church, but the order of the New Testament is the order of a particular church, wherein there needs no such subordination of ministries as in the other, which was national: the eye of common sense sees this difference.

The law of nature, whether written in the heart of man, or to be seen in the workmanship of the world, from which you draw your fifth argument, doth not prove superiority amongst officers in a particular assembly, but only that there must be government in all societies, which may well be, though the governors be of one order and rank.

Lastly, they against whom you deal, do maintain, as you say, an inequality in their government, in making the pastor superior to the teacher, &c., and if they do so, why deal you against them? and why do you labour so carefully to prove against them their own practice to be lawful? though if they had not better warrant than you bring, they were ill-bestead. But this is the point, Mr. B., which you never touch: do they which hold two kinds of offices, teaching, and governing elders, or they which hold three

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orders, pastors, teachers, and governing elders, either of them both hold such a superiority, as gives the superior jurisdiction over the inferior ministers? do they make a bishop of bishops, or a shepherd over a flock of shepherds? or do they set up any such ravenous creature as devours the liberty and power, both of the people and other officers, as your bishops do, even as the lean and evil-favoured kine which Pharaoh saw in his dream, ate up the fat kine, and well-favoured. Gen. xli. 18—20. And for the erroneous exposition of Luke xxii. 25, 26, by Dr. Downame, and Dr. Dove, of which you boast, it hath been confuted both before and since they gave it.

On Matt. xviii. 15—17, *in relation to Church Censures.*

Now, howsoever, I purpose not the refutation of every particular in Mr. B.'s second volume, which he might have drawn into as few lines well-nigh as he hath done leaves, had he not rather desired to have uttered many words, than many things: yet seeing how he labours, even till sweating, to trouble the minds of his young students, and silly countrymen, especially about the government and discipline of the church, not caring how absurd expositions of scriptures he admits of, nor how contrary one unto another, so he may weaken the faith of any that way, I will not therefore altogether hold off mine hand, but will open as I go his unsound dealing in this case, especially about Matt. xviii. 15—17, which he will no way have meant of the discipline or censures of the church, and the order of proceeding therein, but that Christ's meaning there, is to direct the Jews how to prosecute their suits in matter of injury before the heathenish magistrates. And this he labours, pages 218, 219, and so on, to prove by many objections and answers, yet as borrowed from other men's books, so put out as other men's sayings, that by this means he himself may avoid some part of that just hatred, by the better sort of people, which he knows will lie upon this odious and ungodly gloss.

First, then, Mr. Bernard grants, page 212, that Christ hath left a government in his church, and so consequently an order for the censuring of offenders, and he accounts the contrary opinion but a familistical conceit, and yet

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this truth he cannot let pass without some untruth at the end of it, and therefore he adds, "that to this familistical conceit the silly Brownists are drawn by force of their own grounds, which are because they will have all in the church to be voluntary professors; where voluntariness is taken away by being under any government: to be subject and ruled is an estate far from freedom: Christians lose thereby Christian liberty," &c. And say in good sooth, Mr. B., would you have men involuntary professors against their wills? Their profession must either be voluntary, with their wills; or involuntary, and against them. Noah prophesying the calling of the Gentiles of Japheth's line, foretells that God will allure or persuade them to dwell in Shem's tents. Gen. ix. 27. And the Scriptures do expressly affirm, that the churches were gathered by persuasion, and voluntary submission unto the gospel. Acts xxviii. 24; 2 Cor. ix. 13. And it is a strange thing, even above wonder, that any man should have preached so many years, and written so many books about religion, and yet not know, that the nature of religion is not to be constrained, but persuaded.

And tell me, Mr. B., did you subscribe the last time unto your bishop's government *sponte* and *ex animo*, according to the canon, yea, or no? Or if you think that too curious a question, answer me, whether you be under the king's government voluntarily, or against your will? If against your will, it is a treacherous disposition in you: if voluntarily, or willingly, how sillily then do you (which are thus rife in imputing silliness unto others) argue, that voluntariness is taken away by being under any government! as though all government were tyranny, and all obedience slavery: but reason why Mr. B. should thus speak, know I none, except it be, because in the Church of England, the ecclesiastical government of and canonical obedience unto the prelates is such as he speaks of; by which Christians indeed lose Christian liberty: but in the easy yoke of Christ it is not so. And if Christians must be subject to princes in civil affairs, for conscience' sake, Rom. xiii. 3, 5, 6, than which nothing is more voluntary, how much more is the subjection of the saints unto the government of Christ, most free and voluntary, yea,

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by how much more full and entire Christ's government is over the saints, whether within or without, by so much more voluntary, and free, is their obedience both ways. And so pass on to the thing I chiefly intend, and that is to show, that if there be a government left for the church, and order set for the punishment of offenders by Christ the King thereof, that then this xviiith of Matthew is the place where that order is to be found. Let Mr. B., that I may use his own words, pages 224, 225, "declare where else is, not a more perfect rule, but, any rule for it left by Christ, or not any supply, but any mention made elsewhere," &c. The reasons now follow, in the next place, by which Mr. B. would prove that Christ Jesus, Matt. xviii. 15—17, speaks not of church admonitions and censures, but of private injuries, and the civil managing of them.

His first reason is taken from the coherence of these verses with "that which goes before in the chapter: where Christ admonisheth his disciples to take heed both of the offences that should be given, as also of offending others." True, Mr. B., for the meaning of Christ was not only to prepare them against the manifold scandals, and stumbling stones of offence, especially in the new kingdom to which he prepared them, which Satan would cast before them every step they took, either to turn them out of the way of life, or to stop them in it: but also to lay strait charge upon them, that they for their parts cast no stumbling blocks before others: admonishing them very severely neither easily to take nor to give offence. And, because through pride in ourselves, and contempt of others, we are emboldened to give offence, especially to them in whom we behold any great infirmities, our Saviour Christ proceeds to show what great care the Lord takes for the meanest of his, and what account he makes of them, teaching them all moderation and compassion towards them in their infirmities. But lest any should then say, If it be so, the best way is to let men alone in their sins, Christ prescribes a remedy for this evil, even that golden mean, verses 15—17, that we should neither be bitter nor rigorous towards them, to cause them to scandalize, nor yet so remiss, as by connivency to flatter them in their sins.

For the occasion of the words, and the argument taken

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from it, because the author puts it down, not as he proves it to be, but as it is thought, I pass it by as one of the thoughts spoken of by the wise man, in the Proverbs, and with it the scope, which he tells us, is held to be a moderating of the Jew's passion for private injuries offered, as being both together, and with them the exposition also in the fourth place, as being only so many beggings of the question in hand. The sum of which exposition is, for to relate all Mr. Bernard's words were too tedious, that "if one Jew offered another injury, and would not satisfy him when he required it, either privately or with a witness or two, the party injured was to complain to the Jewish Sanhedrim, and if that would not serve the turn, he might if he would proceed with him, and bring him before the Roman power, and sue him at Cæsar's bar, as if he were a publican or heathen." The reasons now to prove this interpretation follow. And the first is because Christ spake according to the time, as Matt. v. 23, 26. It follows not that because Christ so spake that one time, and in that one place, that therefore he so speaks here. What is less forcible? Second, as Christ in that place spake both ecclesiastically and civilly, as you expressly affirm, so, if you grant in proportion, that he speaks here both civilly for injuries, and ecclesiastically for sins, you speak truth enough at the least to overthow yourself.

Your second and third proofs, taken from Peter's understanding of Christ, and Christ's answer again in the parable, though it were no strange thing for Peter to understand that civilly which Christ spake spiritually, nor for Christ to reply according to the present understanding, do not show that Christ's speech is to be restrained to personal injuries: the contrary shall appear by and by. And the same answer may serve to the fourth and sixth arguments.

The fifth argument is taken from the propriety of speech in the text: as first because Christ saith, against thee, which, say you, shows the offence to be private, &c. I grant it, and that Christ there fetches his beginning from private, or rather from secret offences and sins, which being known unto one only, may by one be remitted. Your second argument is drawn from this term "brother," which shows, say you, that Christ meant the Jews, whom alone both the Jews

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and disciples of Christ did account brethren. If Christ meant only Jews, what makes it matter, if the Jews only were brethren; that is, of the church? but it is not true, you say, that only Jews were accounted brethren by the disciples of Christ at that time: Christ shows that they which believe, and obey his words, are his, and so his disciples' brethren, as did amongst others, Matt. xii. 49, 50, many of the Samaritans, which were no Jews, long before this time. John iv. 39, 41, 42. That these words, "thou hast gained or won thy brother," show an alienation of mind in the party that doth the injury, is idle, as the former. For the alienation of mind will rather be in him that hath received the injury, which a man may do of ignorance, self-love, covetousness, or other by-regards, without any change of his affection towards the person injured: the words in truth show, that the lost sheep is found, the sinner converted. The next words are, "let him be to thee, which," you tell us, "show such a church as the offender might not regard, and so the plaintiff unremedied might seek further." If you mean by these words, "might not regard," that he might lawfully not regard it, you err; if that he might be so wicked, as not to regard, it is no new thing for wicked persons to disregard the church of Christ. Your addition of dismissing to further proceedings, is your own, and so I leave it to you. And the reason why Christ saith, "let him be to thee," is, because the brother spoken to was the first and principal in the accusation: as under the law, the accuser of the false prophet must "first have his hand upon him," Deut. xiii. 9, whom the rest of the people must follow in putting him to death.

The last words, publican and heathen, do not declare that Christ speaks of the Jews at that time either only or civilly, but serve for other purposes, as I shall presently manifest, taking arguments from these words, as from all the rest, to prove, that Christ here speaks of sin, and of excommunication for sin.

My first reason I draw from the coherence, wherein I have formerly manifested, Christ speaks not of private injuries only, but of all such scandals as are to be found in that strait way to heaven, no, nor of injuries at all as they hurt the outward man, but as they are sins, and hurt and hinder the

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soul in the way of godliness: and so by the consequence of coherence, if Christ's words hang one upon another, he speaks, ver. 15, 16, 17, of sin and the carrying of it.

2. I reason from the term, brother, which, since it appertained at this time from the disciples, to many which might not be brought before the Jewish Sanhedrim, as to the believing Romans, Samaritans, and the like, cannot be meant as is pretended, but speaks of a religious fellowship to which any brother may be brought, of what country or condition soever.

As the word *ἁμαρτάνω*, turned offend, is of general signification by your own grant, and so cannot be restrained to that particular kind of offence: so is it most properly used for sin, and that usually by this evangelist, Matt. iii. 6; ix. 2; xii. 31; xxvi. 28, and which is specially to be observed, when Luke would speak of trespasses or offences as sins against God, he useth this word; but when in the same place he speaks of them as of injuries against men, he useth another word, ch. xi. 4. And see how soundly Mr. B. deals, when he should show that the word turned, "offend," is not meant of sins, but of injuries; he brings in four principal writers varying, as he saith, about the word: and yet the unadvised man considers not, that all four of them, as he himself alleges them, understand it of sin, and not one of them of injuries, and so speak against him.

If Christ here spake of injuries where he saith, "If he hear thee, thou hast won or gained thy brother," he would have said, Thou hast won or gained thy goods, or good name wherein he injured thee.

If these words be meant of injuries and wrongs, then Christ commands his disciples not to suffer wrongs at their brethren's hands, but to deal with them in the order here prescribed, for Christ expressly commands to tell the church; and so Christ's doctrine, and Paul's teaching the suffering of wrong, 1 Cor. vi. 7, should contradict the one the other.

By this exposition one Jew might account another as a heathen, which was utterly unlawful: he might not refuse religious communion with him in the temple, into which no heathen might come; he might not deny him a portion

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in the land of Canaan, the type of the kingdom of heaven: he might not account or call him other than a brother, whatsoever he were, till the time came of the Jews defraction or breaking off for unbelief. Acts vii. 2; xxii. 1; xxiii. 1; Rom. xi. 17.

This interpretation confirms a point of anabaptistry, namely, that it is not lawful for brethren so remaining, to sue at Cæsar's bar, where it is most evident, that brethren always might, and may, yea, and such a case may fall out, ought to sue, without any alienation of affection, or such heathenish thought one of another, as Mr. B. would have Christ in this place to commend unto them: for even these last words, "Let him be to thee as a heathen and publican," are a commandment, as "Let your speech be yea, yea; nay, nay," Matt. v. 37, and hundreds of others delivered in the Scriptures under the same form of words. And to conclude, Christ our Saviour in these words describes excommunication by the effects of it, which are, withdrawing from the brother obstinate in sin, both in religious and civil fellowship and familiarity, as the Jews did withdraw both from the heathens and publicans in both. John iv. 9; Luke xv. 2. And this very phrase Paul most clearly expounds, when he directs the church, 1 Cor. v. 11, not to be commingled with obstinate offenders, nor to eat with them: this ever provided, that no excommunication or other act in religion whatsoever, may dissolve either civil or natural society.

The next reason is drawn from verse 18, where Christ ratifying in the hands of his church this his power, speaks in express terms of binding and loosing, not only in earth, but in heaven also; which word, methinks, alone should satisfy the conscience of any godly-minded man, yea and stop the mouth of the most shameless, that Christ speaks of sin, and sin only. Yet is Mr. B. neither satisfied nor silent, but replies, that binding and loosing in this place is not properly, or only to be understood of Christ's ministers: but is allowed to private persons, and for this, page 223, he brings sundry reasons. Consider, reader, this severe censurer of Mr. Smyth's unstableness: Mr. B. in his former book, page 95, will have this power of binding and loosing spoken of in this place to be in the

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officers of the church, two or three, and at no hand in private persons: and for this there he brings sundry reasons: in this his next book, this power is flitted to two or three private persons, and must not be drawn to the ministry only, and for this, he brings as many reasons. Observe, further, the very sum of Mr. B.'s answer is, that Christ speaks not here of binding and loosing in the office of the ministry. So we affirm, and that by two or three having this power cannot be meant two or three ministers, considered severally from the body, which alone are not the church for any public administration, but the officers of the church: but by two or three are meant the meanest communion or society of saints, whether with officers or without officers. And is this a sufficient answering of an adversary to bring sundry reasons to prove the very thing which he affirms?

Add to all these, that when the injuries offered to Christ's disciples, and such as would respect his direction, were usually for the profession of Christ, it had been a most idle course to have complained either to the Jewish Sanhedrim, or Romish magistracy, which would have added injury to injury.

Lastly, where Christ, ver. 23, in his answer to Peter's question, makes the protasis or first part of his comparison, "the kingdom of heaven," which is the church, he shows plainly, that all the while he hath spoken of church affairs, and the carrying of them. And thus much to prove that the Lord Jesus, the King of his church, hath left in this xviiith of Matthew a rule and order for the punishment of offenders in it. But this tedious matter is not yet ended. For Mr. B. marshals in eight fresh reasons, to force all the reformed churches in the world with us, to give over this hold of Matt. xviii, pp. 224—226 of this his last book: the best is they are of no great strength.

The first is a bare affirmation that the former exposition by me confuted is true.

His second reason is because Christ hath erected no government in his church; for why he should add, by public doctrine, I see not, except he would insinuate, that Christ taught this point privately, and in a corner, but for this brings he no one scripture or reason: as if his bare

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word were enough to stablish an idol king in his church, without officers or laws. Where, notwithstanding in his former book, pp. 90—93, he proves by many scriptures that Christ hath given officers for the government of his church: which no man denies but himself.

In the third place he affirms, that Christ by the church means not the Jewish Sanhedrim, wherein I assent unto his saying, for reason brings he none.

Touching the nature of the church's government, which he gropes at in the fourth place, I have spoken elsewhere.

The fifth reason followeth, which comprehends under it many petty reasons, and amongst other the sixth, seventh, and eighth in order: which, save for the show in the margin of eight distinct numbered reasons, might well enough have been spared. The sum is that this xviiith of Matthew is no perfect rule of discipline: the reasons are because neither all sorts of sins are here brought in, nor all the parts of discipline here comprehended. And how do these things appear? First, because a man is here to proceed only for trespasses, or as it is better turned, for offences, against himself, but not for sin against God, against the magistrate, or against another. But here you should have remembered, Mr. B., that sin, being the transgression of the law, 1 John iii. 4, is only against God, to speak properly, and therefore David, notwithstanding his defiling of Bathsheba, and murdering of Uriah, confesseth that he had sinned against God only. Psalm li. 6. But as the same transgression is so committed, as man scandalizeth, or takes offence at it, so it is a sin against him; whether the deed done respect God or man, yea man or beast, public or private person, a man's self, or others in the object: and so he may forgive it after the order prescribed by Christ. And where by way of exception you demand how one man can remit trespasses done against another, it is true it cannot be, if by trespasses be meant personal injuries: but considering the same trespasses, as they are sins against God, at which a brother takes offence, so the brother offended may forgive them upon the offender's repentance.

And asking how men can forgive rebellion against God, you seem to have forgotten yourself: for in the very leaf next before going, you both grant and prove, that not only

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ministers by virtue of their office, but private persons also may bind and loose sins. The thing itself you grant, and for the manner of it, it is as they say, by manifesting, and making known, outwardly, salvation, and the forgiveness of sins.

To your third objection concerning the keeping secret of public crimes against the magistrate upon the offender's repentance, you answer yourself, for if they be public, or of public nature, they may not be kept secret, neither are they capable of the order of secret dealing in them.

And here falls into consideration your seventh reason, which is, that if discipline be grounded upon Matt. xviii. then the church must judge in civil affairs, and enter upon the bounds of the magistrate.

And are you ignorant, Mr. B., that civil actions, as they draw scandalous sin with them, may be censured ecclesiastically, as may also religious actions be punished civilly by the magistrate, which is the preserver of both tables, and so to punish all breaches of both, especially such as draw with them the violation of the positive laws of kingdoms, or disturbance of common peace? Take your own instance of murder. The magistrate is to punish it civilly in all his subjects, whether the parties repent or no; the church is to censure it ecclesiastically in her members, yea though the magistrate pardon or pass by it, except the parties delinquent repent, for then they are to be forgiven. And what usurpation is here upon the magistracy? you to suppress God's ordinance do flatter the magistrate, and accuse the innocent.

Next you except, that this of Matthew is a rule for sins private, and more secret, but not for public and open sin. You might as well say that the pattern of prayer prescribed by Christ, Matt. vi., is not perfect, nor a rule for private prayer, or for things concerning ourselves only, because it teacheth us to say, Our Father, and forgive us our sins. But who knows not, that generals include their specialities under them? The Lord Jesus in teaching his disciples to say, forgive us our sins jointly, teacheth them in the same place to ask forgiveness either of their own sins, or the sins of others severally, as occasion serves: so in teaching here all the degrees of admonition jointly, he implies also the

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dealing in any one of them severally, if there be occasion. And this exposition of Mr. B. can I not fitlier resemble than to the practice of some silly pursuivant, that, being sent to attach some traitor, or other malefactor dwelling in Berwick, and so to bring him to the court, if he should meet the party by the way, would refuse to meddle with him, and would say, that he was sent to Berwick to fetch him, and would either bring him from thence, or would let him alone. And it seems, if Mr. B. might construe his commission, he would so advise him. But would not common sense teach a man, that the nearer he met with the party he sought, the more labour were spared, and that he were to apprehend him where he found him? So where Christ sends his disciples to deal with sin afar off, as it were, and in the first, and utmost degree, but if it be come nearer, and be found in the second or third degree, it is to be taken where it is found. If it be secret, and yet rest betwixt the brother offending, and offended, it must there be dealt with: if it be come nearer the court, and be wrought before two, or three, or more, it must there, and in that order be undertaken, the first degree is over, and that labour spared: if it be of public nature, or publicly committed, the two former degrees are past, and the labour in them spared: the sin must be dealt with accordingly. And the church either by information from any brother or brethren, or by immediate notice taken, may convent or call for the offender, that he which sinned publicly, may publicly be rebuked. And this may serve for answer to the eighth and last exception.

Now for allowing of the plaintiff to seek further remedy, and of the referring of the party obstinate unto him, which is the sum of the sixth argument, as also of these terms, "Let him be to thee as an heathen and publican," which is another exception, together with that consideration, that the party offended is the principal in all the degrees of proceeding, I have formerly spoken in the exposition of the words, to which the reader is to look back for answer, if such idle conjecture give any cause of doubt to any. One only blow more is to be warded, by which Mr. B. would disable this 18th of Matthew from being any rule of discipline, and that is, because it provides not for suspension;

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we grant it doth not, and you yourself half grant, that no such thing is to be found in the New Testament. And what reason have you, or any other man to put us to prove your corruptions and devices, which you know we neither practise, nor allow of?

On the Governors of the Church.

These things thus ended, and the received exposition of Matt. xviii. confirmed, viz. that Christ in it prescribes a rule of discipline in the church, I come to your reasons Mr. B. in your first book, by which you would prove that this church is the chief governors.

The first whereof is, that "Christ could not be understood either then, or now, except he spake as the practice was then, or took some order afterward, and so you go about to prove unto us, that the chief governors only had authority to excommunicate, both in the synagogues and in the church of Corinth."

To this I answer sundry things. First, It follows not, that Christ was not then, or cannot now be understood, except he spake with some such reference as you note. The words are so plain, the order so equal, the state of the church under the New Testament, which is not, as before, national, but a particular assembly, so capable of such an ordinance, as that laying aside prejudice, and politic respects, there can be nothing more plainly spoken or more easily understood.

2. It doth no way prejudice the exposition we give, though the disciples for the present understood it not: they understood little, no, not touching the death and resurrection of Christ, or nature of his kingdom when they were, at the first, taught them, till either by their own experience, or by the extraordinary gift of the Holy Ghost, or some other means, the things formerly taught them were brought to their remembrance. Matt. xvi. 21, 22; xx. 20, 21; Mark xvi. 14; Luke xxiv. 20—25, 26—44. And it is expressly affirmed, Acts i. 3, that the Lord Jesus did the forty days before his ascension instruct them in such things as concerned the kingdom of God, which is the church.

The next thing to be considered is your proofs from Scripture, that the power of excommunication was in the

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chief governors. But the places prove no such thing. John ix. 22, xii. 42, and xvi. 2, do only prove an agreement amongst the Jews, that such as confessed Christ should be dissynagogued: but that this authority was only in the hands of the chief governors, cannot be thence collected. I know there was at Jerusalem a representative church for the whole nation, of which we shall speak hereafter, but that there was such a church representative in every synagogue, furnished with such power can never be concluded from these scriptures. They rather indeed prove the contrary. It is said, John ix. 22, that the Jews had ordained, that such as confessed Christ, should be dissynagogued: which words do rather interest the people in the business than otherwise. If you think, that because there is mention made of the Pharisees, John ix. 13, 15, 16, and xii. 42, the officers only are meant, you are deceived. For Pharisaism amongst the Jews was not an office, but a sect. There were no other lawful officers ecclesiastical amongst them, but the Levites whom the Lord took from among the children of Israel, instead of the first born, for his service, Lev. viii.; Numb. iii. 12, 13, and viii. 14, 16, 17: but many of the Pharisees, were of other tribes. Phil. iii. 5.

Besides, I see no sufficient reason to persuade me, that this casting out of the synagogue was any ecclesiastical censure, but rather a violent rejection or extrusion out of the place: as nothing was more common than such tumultuous outrages in those days. And the very same word that John useth, chap. ix. ver. 35, Luke useth, chap. iv. 28, 29, for the violent extrusion of Christ himself by the Jews, upon the like occasion, both out of the synagogue, and city. The same also doth John himself use, chap. ii. 15 (ἐκβάλλω), speaking of Christ's casting the money-changers out of the temple. And yet neither the Nazarites excommunicate Christ, nor Christ the money-changers.

But if there were amongst the Jews at that time any such distinct ordinance of excommunication ecclesiastical, it was a Jewish device, I am persuaded, and without ground of the Scriptures; and that for these causes:

First, Every blasphemer, or worshipper of unknown gods was by the law of Moses to die the death without redemption, that so evil might be put from Israel. Exod. xxii. 20; Lev. xxiv. 16; Deut. xiii. 6—9, 12—15.

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And so the Jews reputing this blind man such a one, were to put him to death; but being deprived of this power by the Romans, through the just judgment of God for their sins, they devised this other course of dissynagoguing, or excommunicating offenders by them so deemed.

Secondly, The several synagogues were not distinct churches, but members of that one national church, which was both representatively, and originally at Jerusalem: neither could any of them excommunicate out of the temple, which was a higher communication than theirs: and so it is very probable that Christ found this blind man afterwards in the temple, John ix. 38, compared with x. 22, into which (had he been ecclesiastically excommunicated) he might not have entered: neither hangs it together, that any rejected in the communion of the synagogue, might be received in the communion of the temple.

Thirdly, The Lord did choose the whole nation of the Jews to be his peculiar people, and took all and every one of them into covenant with himself, gave them the land of Canaan for an inheritance, as a type of the kingdom of heaven, erected a policy over them, civil, and ecclesiastical, in the judicial and ceremonial law, called the Old Testament, making the same persons and all of them, though in divers respects the church, and the commonwealth, whereupon the church is also called the commonwealth of Israel. Exod. xix. 5, 6; Lev. xx. 24, 26; Deut. iv. 6, 7; xxix. 2, 10—12; Josh. i. 2—6; Rom. ix. 4; Eph. ii. 12; Hence it followeth, that except a man might enjoy one type of the kingdom of heaven, as was the land of Canaan, and not another, as was the temple, or tabernacle, Heb. ix. 24, except he might be under one part of the Old Testament, or covenant of God, namely the judicial law for the commonwealth, and not under another part of it, the ceremonial law for the church, it cannot be that any such ordinance as excommunication could be used lawfully in the Jewish Church.

Yet do I not deny but that the lepers and other persons legally unclean, were for a time debarred from the communion of the church, and from all the sacrifices, and services thereof, but this inhibition, say I, was no way in the nature of an excommunication.

For first, It was for ceremonial uncleanness, issues,

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leprosy, and the like, which were not sins, but punishments of sins at the most.

2. It did not only exclude men from the communion of the church, but of the commonwealth also, and the affairs thereof.

3. It did not agree in the end with excommunication. The end of excommunication is the repentance of the party excommunicated, 1 Cor. v. 5, but the person legally unclean, whether he repented, or no, was to bear his shame till the date of his time were out, yea to his dying day, if his disease continued so long. Lev. xii. xiii., xiv.; Numb. v. 2—4; xii. 10, 14; 2 Chron. xxvi. 19—21. A type I confess it was of excommunication, as legal pollution was of moral sin: whence I also conclude that the type, and thing typed outwardly could not both stand together.

But here it will be demanded of me, did not the Lord require in the Jewish Church true, moral, and spiritual holiness also? God forbid I should run upon that desperate rock of Anabaptistry. The Lord was holy then as now, and so would have his people be then holy, as now. Lev. xi. 44; 1 Pet. i. 15, 16. Yea so jealous was the Lord over his people that he took order then as well as now, that no sin should be suffered unreformed, no obstinate sinner uncut off. Some sins were of that nature, as he that committed them was by the law to die the death without pardon, or partiality, and so to be cut off from the Lord's people. Lev. xx. And when other sins not of that nature were committed, whether of ignorance, or otherwise, the party offending was to be told, and admonished of his offence, and so to manifest his repentance by the confession of his sin, and profession of his faith in the Mediator, by offering his appointed sacrifice, and so his sin was forgiven him. Lev. iv. 13—15, 20, 21—23, 26—28, 35; v. 1—10, and xix. 17; Numb. v. 6, 7. But now if there were with the least sin joined obstinacy, or presumption, the party so sinning was to be cut off from his people, Numb. xv. 30—32, 34, 36; Deut. xvii. 12, and for this cause the Jews were so oft admonished to destroy the workers of wickedness, that there should be no wickedness amongst them, that they should take away evil

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from Israel, and from forth of the midst of them. Lev. xx. 14; Deut. xvii. 12, xix. 19. And upon this ground doth David as the chief magistrate, whom this business chiefly concerned, vow his service unto God in this kind, and that he would even betimes destroy all the wicked of the land, that he might cut off the workers of iniquity from the city of the Lord, Psa. ci. 8: though he afterwards failed in the execution of this duty. And to the very same end did "Asa the king with all the people enter a covenant of oath, to seek the Lord God of their fathers, with all their heart, and with all their soul: and that, whosoever would not seek the Lord God of Israel should be slain, whether he were small or great, man or woman." 2 Chron. xv. 12—15.

To end this point, upon which I have insisted something the longer for sundry purposes in their place to be manifested: as the Lord usually conveyed spiritual both blessings, and curses unto the Jews under those which were bodily, so here was the spiritual judgment of excommunication comprehended under this bodily judgment of death, by which the party delinquent was wholly cut off visibly from the Lord's covenant, and people.

That which you add of Chloe's complaint made to the chief governor the apostle, is true, but misapplied. You make an erroneous collection from it out of your own lamentable experience. Because your church of Worksop can reform no abuse within itself, but must complain to your lord's grace of York, or his substitute, therefore you imagine the Church of Corinth to have been in the same bondage, wherein you are: and Chloe to have complained to Paul's court. But it is plain, Mr. B., to them that do not shut their eyes, and harden their hearts against the truth: that the Church of Corinth was planted in the liberty of the gospel, and had this power of Christ to reform abuses, and to excommunicate offenders, without sending to Paul from one part of the world to another, and that the Corinthians, chap. v., are reproved for failing in this duty. And had Mr. B. but taken this course in his writing, that two of his leaves had hung together, he might have spared this objection, considering what he wrote, page 92, that the same persons have the power to preach, administer the sacraments, and excommunicate: for that

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he means by government. Now he cannot be ignorant, that both the power, and practice of preaching, and administering the sacraments were in the Church of Corinth in Paul's absence. 1 Cor. xi. 20, xiv. 1, &c. And so by your own grant the Church of Corinth had power to excommunicate though Paul were absent. Whereupon I also infer it was their sin not to use it.

Now for the practice of Chloe's family, we know Paul was an apostle, and general officer, and so entitled to the affairs in all the churches in the world: whereupon Chloe complained unto him of such abuses in the church as were both of public nature, and which the church would not reform: otherwise it had been both slander, and folly to have complained. And what corn doth this wind shake? Do we make it unlawful for any member to inform the officers of public enormities in the church, that they according to their places might see reformation of them? Yea if the pastor, or other principal officer of the church were absent necessarily, we doubt not but it were the duty of any brother, or brethren in the like case, to entreat their help for the direction, reproof, and reformation of the church, for any public enormities there done, or suffered: who might also judge, and condemn the same themselves, and for their parts, exhorting, and directing the whole church in their public meeting to do the like as Paul did.

The Apostles not the Church.

Your three next arguments to prove that "Tell the church" is Tell the officers, are idle descants upon the forms, and phrases of speech scraped together to fill your book with.

First, You affirm that "Christ having spoken in the third person, Tell the church, when he comes to ratify the authority to be committed to his apostles, turns his speech to the second person, not saying, what it, but what you shall bind, and loose, &c."

In so saying you give the cause, though you presently eat up your own grant. For you affirm, that by the church, ver. 17, is meant the whole body, of which Christ speaks in the third person: and what say we more? But where you add that the authority is not given till verse 18, and

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that then Christ turns his speech to his apostles, it is your own devised gloss.

For first, It is evident, that Christ establisheth the power of binding, and loosing in the hands of the church, speaking in the third person, ver. 17, and that so firmly, as what brother soever refuseth to hear her voice is to be expelled from all religious communion. Unto this the 18th verse is added partly for explanation, and partly for confirmation. For whereas the party admonished might say with himself, Well, if the church disclaim me I shall disclaim it, if it condemn me, I shall condemn it again, the Lord doth here back the church's censures for her encouragement, and for the terror of the refractory, despising her voice, and that under a contestation, that what she binds, and looseth upon earth, namely after his will, he also will bind, and loose in heaven.

And for the change of persons in the 17th and 18th verses, it is merely grammatical, and not natural. It is common with the Holy Ghost, sometimes for elegancy, sometimes for explication, sometimes for further enforcement of the same thing, to, and upon the same persons, thus to vary the phrase of speech in the first, second, or third person grammatically, as the reader may take a taste in these particulars. Psa. lxxv. 1; Isa. i. 2—6, &c.; Matt. v. 10—12, &c.; and in this very chapter, ver. 7, 8; Rom. vi. 14—16; viii. 4, 5, 12, 13, &c.

Your third reason, that, "because Christ speaks of a few, two, or three gathered together, therefore he means the officers of the church, and not all the body," is of no force, if the body consist but of two, or three, as it comes to pass where churches are raised in persecution, as the most true churches are. Yet if Christ do speak of two or three officers of a church, gathered together in his name, he speaks against you, where all the power of the keys over many thousand churches are in the hands of two archprelates, and from them delegated and derived to their several underlings.

But the truth is, that gracious promise, which Christ here lays down, for the comfort of all his saints, you do engross into the hands of a few elders. You might as well affirm, that only two or three officers gathered

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together, have a promise to be heard in their prayers, and not a communion of two or three brethren, for Christ, ver. 19, 20, speaks principally, and expressly of prayer, though with reference to the binding, and loosing of sin, which, as all other ordinances, are sanctified by prayer. The very scope of the place, and reason of the speech is this. The Lord Jesus had, ver. 18, enfranchised the church, with a most excellent, and honourable privilege: now the disciples did already see with their own eyes, and were more fully taught by their Master, that the church should arise from small, and base beginnings, and that it was also, by reason of persecution, subject to great dissipation. Matt. vii. 14; x. 17, 18, 22, 23; xiii. 31, 32, lest therefore their hearts should be discouraged, and they, or others, driven into suspicion, that the Lord would any way neglect them, or his promise towards them for their paucity and meanness, he most graciously prevents, and frees them from that jealousy, and tells them and all others, for their comfort, that though the church, or assembly consist but of two or three, as such beginnings the true church of God had and have, though your English Church begun with a kingdom in a day, Acts xvi. 14, 15; xvii. 34; xix. 7, yet that should no way diminish their power, or prejudice the accomplishment of his promise. And the reason hath been formerly rendered, because this power for binding, and loosing, being given to the faith of Peter, depends not upon the order of office, multitude of people, or dignity of person, but merely upon the Word of God. And hence is it that Christ thus graciously descends even to two or three, wheresoever assembled in his name, yea though it be in a cave, or den of the earth: of which most gracious and necessary privilege you would bereave them.

Now in your fourth reason out of ver. 19, you do most ignorantly err in the grammatical construction: for you make a change of the person again, where there is no change at all. Christ speaks only in the third person, as the original makes it plain, though the English tongue do not so distinctly manifest it to an ignorant man. Christ saith not, Whatsoever you two shall agree of, shall be given to them, that is to the church, but Whatsoever two of you shall agree of, or consent in, they two that so agree shall

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obtain it of God. Which words, Mr. B., you do most unsufferably pervert, to the seducing of the ignorant: as if Christ had said, If two, or three of your officers, or you two or three officers, shall agree together of a thing, whatsoever they, that is the church shall desire, namely of the officers, for so you expound the words, it shall be given them, where it is most evident that they which are to agree upon the thing, they are to ask it, and that of God, who will give it them. And where the scripture saith, that the brother offended, speaking indefinitely of any brother, and so of the officers themselves, must complain to the church, Mr. B. on the contrary, as if he would even beard the Lord Jesus, tells us the church must complain to the officers.

Your fifth reason follows with many little ones in the womb of it, which you bring forth in order, to prove, that Christ speaks here figuratively, and that by the church he means the governors.

The first is, "It agrees with the practice of the Jewish Church from whence it is held, that the manner of governing in the church is fetched."

And is this the necessary proof you speak of? whatsoever is so held, is so in truth. And yet in your second book, as hath been showed, you bring in sundry men holding contrary things, as if contraries could be true. Well, I confess it is so held, and that by many, with whom I would gladly consent, if the Scriptures taught me not to hold otherwise. It had been good here the author had showed us, what the government of the Jewish Church was, and not thus slightly to have passed over things of this moment. For the purpose in hand thus much.

The Jewish Church.

The church of the Jews was a national church, the Lord separating unto himself the whole nation, from all other nations, to be his people, and that he might be their God. Exod. xix. 5, 6; Lev. xx. 24, 26; Deut. xxix. 10—15. And, as one of the Lord's ordinances suits with another, and depends upon another, so from this national church doth necessarily arise a representative church. For where communion together in the holy things of God is an act,

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and operation of the church, for the mutual edification of the parts, and that it was impossible, that the whole body of a nation should in the entire, simple, proper, or personal parts, and members communicate together, the Lord so ordered and disposed, that that communion should be had, and exercised after a manner, and in a sort, and that was by way of representation.

And to this end the Lord made choice of one special place in the land, which he gave his people to possess, at the first alterable, but afterwards constant, and unchangeable, where he would have his tabernacle pitched, and his temple built, where he would put his name, and dwell, and which he would honour above all places, with his glory and presence.

There was also one only tabernacle or temple, one high priest, one altar, unto which the whole national Church had reference, thither must they bring all their sacrifices, tithes and offerings, thither were causes, hard and difficult, to be brought, that the people might be showed the sentence of judgment, informed, and taught the law, by the priests of the Levites. There was the daily sacrifice offered for the whole national church, morning and evening continually, there the Lord appointed with the children of Israel, sanctifying the place with his glory, binding himself by his promise, to dwell amongst them, and to be their God. There was the high priest to carry graven upon two onyx stones, as the stones of remembrance of the children of Israel put upon the shoulders of the ephod, the names of the children of Israel according to their tribes, for a remembrance: and again, the names of the children of Israel, according to their twelve tribes in twelve stones set upon the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, for a remembrance continually before the Lord. There was also set upon the pure table of Shittim wood in the tabernacle, twelve loaves of shew bread continually before the Lord, according to the twelve tribes of Israel for a remembrance. Deut. xii. 5—7; Josh. xviii. 1; 1 Kings viii. 10, 29; Deut. xvii. 8—12; 2 Chron. xix. 8—11; Exod. xxix. 38, 39, 42, 43, 45; Exod. xxviii. 9—15, 20, 29, 30; Exod. xxv. 30; Lev. xxiv. 5—8.

Now all these were ordinances representative, in a church representative: and other church representative amongst

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the Jews, I neither know, nor acknowledge. And the ground of this representation was the necessary absence of the people represented. Necessary, I call it, whether we respect the ordinance of God inhibiting the people's entrance into the place, where the most of these representations were made, or whether we respect the impossibility of the whole nation's ordinary assembling, and communicating together.

And hereupon it comes to pass, that all other churches since, so framed, and of such quantity, as that they cannot ordinarily assemble together, and keep communion, have also as their images, or shadows, their churches representative. The catholic visible church of Rome hath her visible church representative, the pope's consistory, or college of cardinals, or the general council gathered by his authority. The national Church of England hath her national church representative, the convocation house: as have also the provincial and diocesan churches their representations, the archbishops, and bishops' consistories. But as the bodies of these churches are monstrous devices of men's brains, there being no other churches under the New Testament but particular assemblies, so are their shadows, the churches' representative, mere devices of devices.

And to apply this nearer the purpose. Since the church now consisteth not of one nation severed from all other nations, but of particular assemblies of faithful people, separated from all other assemblies, which like so many distinct flocks, do ordinarily herd together, and so communicate in the word, prayer, sacraments, and censures, Acts xx. 28; 1 Pet. v. 2, 3; 1 Cor. v. 4; xi. 17, 20; xiv. 23; and that where the church grew sometimes greater by the sudden, and extraordinary conversion of more than could well so assemble, then was there presently a dispersion of the former and a multiplication of more particular assemblies. Acts ii. 41, 42; viii. 4—6; ix. 31; xiv. 23, 27; xv. 22, 30; Rev. i. 4, 11; this rases the foundation of all representative churches, as either politic devices, or at the best, preposterous imitations of the Jewish church, and polity. For, as I have formerly said, and common sense teacheth it, the foundation of representation is the necessary absence of that which is represented,

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whether person, or thing. And so, since there is no necessity, that the body of a particular church should be absent, but on the contrary a necessity, that the same be present, at and in all the public administrations, and actions of communion in the church's holy things, we do therefore disclaim as superfluous, and feigned, all representative churches whatsoever.

Secondly, If the outward form of church government now be fetched from the Jewish church, then as in that representative church there was an high priest set over the rest, in whose person, and administration, the representation of the whole church was most eminent, so must there now be also in this representative church one officer over the rest, and as it were their high priest. And so the catholic representative Church of Rome hath an universal bishop, the pope over it: the national, provincial, and diocesan churches representative, national, provincial, and diocesan bishops over them. And so in all equity should the synods, and presbyteries, accounting themselves properly churches, or bodies ecclesiastical, have their officers over them: and so there should always be one, or more ministers over the church of ministers, and whose charge these synods and presbyteries should be, to be fed by them. And the truth is, this reason fetched from the Jewish church, as it far better fits the prelates in England, than the consistorians, so fits it the papists better than either of them both: for there is one bishop over the catholic visible church, as they speak, as there was one high priest over the whole visible church then.

Add unto this, that if the representative church at Jerusalem be a pattern for a representative church unto us, then as there not only hard causes were opened, and declared according to the law, but also the sacrifices offered, and most solemn services performed day by day, without the presence of the body of the church, so now in this our representative church consisting of the officers only, there must be not only the use of the keys for admonition, and excommunication, but there must also be the preaching of the Word, and ministering of the sacraments, which are our most solemn services, whether the people be present or no. And to imagine a power of Christ in the church of the

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officers for the use of one solemn ordinance out of the communion of the body, and not for another, hath no ground from the Jewish church.

Lastly, To fetch the form of government for the church now from the Jewish church, were to revive the Old Testament, which so long since, is abrogated, and disannulled. Heb. viii. 13. For, to speak properly, the Old Testament is nothing but that external policy instituted by Moses in the judicial and ceremonial law, for the dispensation of the typical kingdom and priesthood of Christ, shadowed out by that of Melchisedec king and priest, represented by the administrations of Moses and Aaron, and after continued in the priesthood of the Levites, and kingdom of David and his sons, till Christ, in the dispensation of those worldly and carnal ordinances. Heb. v., vi.; Numb. xviii.; 2 Chron. xiii. 5. Now as the judicials, which were for the government of the congregation civilly, are dead, and do not bind any civil polity, save as they were of common equity: so are the ceremonials, which were for the church's polity, deadly, and may not be revived by any church, save as any of them have new life given by Christ. For though we now be made citizens of the commonwealth of Israel, and one body with them, yet is that in respect of the everlasting covenant confirmed of God with Abraham through Christ, "I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed," four hundred and thirty years before the law was given, or the polity and government of the Jewish, either church, or commonwealth, in it established: Eph. ii. 12; iii. 6; Gen. xvii. 7; Gal. iii. 17: and as we are the sons, and daughters of Abraham by faith, but no way in respect of those Jewish ordinances in the Old Testament, or the order of dispensing them. And yet if it were granted which you would have, that the Church government now is to be patterned by the government of the Jewish church, then it would nothing avail you for the purpose in hand. For the church officers the priests, and Levites unto whom the charge of the whole congregation, for the service of the tabernacle did appertain, Numb. iii. 6, 7; had no authority by the order of their office to inflict any censure spiritually upon the people, as had the civil magistrates to punish them bodily. The priests and Levites were only to interpret the law, and in

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cases extraordinarily difficult, to find out the estate of the person, or thing, and to show what in such a case the law required: and if you will say, they gave judgment it was none otherwise, than as a physician gives judgment of the body, or state of his patient by his faculty, or skill in his art: but to sit upon them formally in judgment, and ecclesiastically to punish them, that they might not do: neither are they called in the Scriptures, judges, as the civil magistrates are. Yea the Scriptures do make a plain difference where the civil elders are to sit, and judge the people, but the priests to stand before the congregation, and to minister unto them. Deut. xvii. 9; 2 Chron. xix. 5, 6; Exod. xviii. 13; Ruth iv. 2; Numb. xvi. 9; 2 Chron. xxxv. 3. Now before we pass over this business in hand, I deem it not amiss upon this occasion, to observe a few things by way of answer to a scripture usually brought out for the foundation of these representative churches and their power, and especially for these national, and provincial synods, and the like. And the scripture is, Acts xv.

1. There was no synod, or assembly of the officers of divers churches, but only certain messengers sent from the church of Antioch, to the church of Jerusalem about the controversy there specified.

2. Neither the church of Antioch which sent the messengers, nor the church at Jerusalem whither they were sent, was a representative church, consisting of officers, much less of chief officers only. For first it is said, ver. 1, 2, that the brethren of Antioch, which chap. xiv. 27, are called the church, and ver. 28, the disciples, and in this chapter ver. 3, the church, and ver. 23, the brethren sent their messengers with Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem: and it will most evidently appear by whom the message was sent, if we consider to whom the answer was returned, ver. 30, where the messengers did not deliver the epistle till they had assembled the multitude. And secondly, it is apparent that at Jerusalem, not only the chief officers the apostles, yea and inferior officers the elders also, met together about it, and sent answer, but the brethren with them, ver. 4, 12, 22.

And these scriptures alone in this chapter, are sufficient to challenge the liberty of the brethren in the discussing

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of public controversies out of the hands of all officers whatsoever.

3. Paul and Barnabas, went not to Jerusalem either for authority, or direction; for being apostles, they had both equal immediate authority from Christ, and equal infallible direction from the Holy Ghost, with the rest of the apostles. Only they went for countenance of the truth in respect of men, and for the stopping the mouths of such deceivers as pretended they were sent by the apostles, ver. 24.

4. Their decrees were absolutely apostolical, and divine scripture by infallible direction from the Holy Ghost, and so imposed upon all other churches of the Gentiles, though they had no delegates there, ver. 23, 28; chap. xvi. 4.

But it will be said, May not the officers of one, or many churches meet together to discuss and consider of matters for the good of the church, or churches, and so be called a church, synod, or the like? I deny it not, so they infringe no order of Christ, or liberty of the brethren, they may so do, and so be called in a sense: but the question now is about such a church, as is gathered for the public administration of admonition, excommunication, and other the like ordinances of Christ, which Mr. B. in his 1st book grants "must be done with the knowledge of the body of the church, and in the open assembly." Page 92.

And here falls into handling certain borrowed stuff in Mr. B.'s 2nd book about this matter, page 178.

As first, that Paul called the elders of Ephesus, and conferred with them without the people, Acts xx. 27, which who denies, but they which set up a lord bishop to rule alone without advising with either the inferior ministers, or people.

But that, which he adds in the next place, hath almost as many errors, as words in it, and that is, that the elders sat in a consistory, with James their bishop at Jerusalem, without the people, and did decree a matter, without asking their voice. Acts xxi. 18.

First, You err in calling it a consistory, or judicial court, for the justification of your own: where it was only an occasional meeting for advice. 2. In making James a bishop whom Christ had made an apostle. The elders were

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bishops, Acts xx. 17, 28; Phil. i. 1; Tit. i. 5, 7. And so if you would have held any proportion you should have made James an archbishop. 3. That you make him their bishop, where bishops, or overseers, are set over the flock, not over the ministers, Acts xx. 28. 4. And most ignorantly, where you will have James and the elders to make a decree for Paul, as if the elders had authority over the apostles, for that is the drift of your argument, or one apostle over another: or as if Paul were subject to consistorian decrees. It was only a matter of advice, that passed amongst them, as all men may see.

Another observation Mr. B. hath in this place, as idle as the rest: and that is, that the elders are superior unto the people, because they are set before them, Acts xv. 22, 23, where if the bold and inconsiderate man had but read the fourth verse of the same chapter he should have seen the people set before the officers; the very same alteration appears ver. 2, 12, so if his argument was of force, two contraries might be true, which is a repugnancy in nature. Yet deny we not but the officers are above the church, in respect of the word, and doctrine they minister, and teach: but we deny the order of elders to be superior to the order of saints, since it is not an order of mastership, but of service.

But I will from this place, Mr. B., if I be not much deceived, take a better argument to prove the contrary to that you say, namely, that the church is an order superior unto the officers. And the reason is, because the churches have authority to send the officers, as their messengers, ver. 2, 3, 22, 32. Now they that send are ever in that respect, superior unto them that are sent.

That which you add in the last place, to wit, that the apostles and elders did acquaint the people with the matter, who consented, but had no authority to make the authority of the apostles and elders nothing, is drawn out of the same cask with the former. In which speech, there is imperfection, contradiction, and ignorance. Imperfection, where you give the people no further liberty than to consent to the matter, being made acquainted with it. For in that it is said, ver. 12, that the multitude kept silence when they had heard James speak truly, and sufficiently, and

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that they held their peace, ver. 13, when they heard Paul and Barnabas speak, it shows they had also liberty of speaking in the matter. had they seen cause. Contradictions you speak, in affirming the people were to consent to the elders, and yet in denying they could prejudice their power, and authority. For howsoever this be true for the apostles, which were infallibly, and immediately directed by the Holy Ghost in their determinations, unto which all were bound absolutely to condescend, as are all the saints at the last day to the judgment to be passed by Christ upon the reprobate, yet is it not so for the elders ordinary, then, or now, which may err, and be deceived. And so where there is liberty of consenting conditionally, and if men see cause, there is also liberty of dissenting, upon the contrary occasion; and so this dissent of the body must either hinder the action, or else it is a mere mockery. Ignorance it is, in the last place, to make equal the authority of the apostles, and elders in this decree. For the decree was merely apostolical, to speak properly, and framed by infallible direction of the Holy Ghost, which the elders in themselves considered had not, as appeareth, ver. 28, and was, and is, in the right end, and equity of it, a part of the canonical scriptures, in penning whereof the elders had no hand: and so is imposed upon the churches of the Gentiles everywhere, ver. 23, with whom the elders of Jerusalem had nothing to do, but only the apostles, which were general men: so that neither brethren, nor elders did more than consent to the decree itself, and that necessarily, as unto a divine oracle.

These things thus ended, I return to the arguments in Mr. B.'s first book to prove by the church; to be meant the chief officers.

Supposed Mischiefs of Authority being solely in the Church.

The second and third whereof being but needless boasts of his former doings, I pass over.

The fourth is, "For order sake and to prevent confusion, for that which is all men's, is no man's:" "whereupon ariseth great carelessness in seeing unto such things, as are all men's in public:" "and by it pride, yea thereupon contention ensueth."

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We do stand for the order of Christ against the confusion of Antichrist in Babylon, which is incapable of all right order: as we also enjoy the right disposition of things, and persons in their places, which is order. And if you call it confusion in an assembly, wherein all have equal power, and voice in the determining of things, some one or few going before the rest in guiding, and directing them, you do, though you consider it not, strike through our sides, the highest and most honourable court or assembly in the whole land, and which is the rule and fountain of all the rest, and that is, the court of Parliament, where all thing pass by voices, all, or the most: the prolocutor being only chosen to propound, and moderate actions: which is also the order in general councils, and, if I be not deceived, in your representative Church of England, your convocation house. Which order also is observed for the main determinations to be made in the privileged cities and corporations in the kingdom. And what greater confusion is there like to be in the determining of other church affairs by voices, than in the calling of ministers? the order of whose election by the suffrages of the multitude, guided by the officers, Acts xiv. 23; vi. 1—5, was both established by the apostles, and continued in the primitive churches, many hundred years.

Now the inconveniency of carelessness in all, where matters concern all, is a strange allegation. Methinks it should make all more careful, the matters especially being of conscience and the persons conscionable, whom they concern. And I see not but you might as well say, it makes all men careless of the knowledge of God, and Christ, and of salvation, and of the Scriptures, because these things concern all. And why do you not with the papists deprive the multitude of the use of the Scriptures in the mother tongue, that you the careful clergy alone might look unto them? But, what though this inconveniency do arise sometimes, through man's corruption, it should be otherwise: and we must ever consider of the nature of God's ordinances in their right use, and when men are exercised in them as they should be, and not according to frail man's aberration, and abuse in, and of the same: and if men be sometimes careless of

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their duties, we must not therefore deprive them of their rights.

And in this plea, Mr. Bernard, methinks you very naturally resemble the mighty oppressors in the world, which under this very pretence, do inclose all the commons of their poor neighbours: for common things, say they, are commonly neglected: and they can make one acre of ground, thus inclosed, worth two in common. But if the Lord denounce such heavy judgments against the inclosers of earthly things, Isa. v. 8, 9, what will be the end of those spiritual engrossers and oppressors, if they repent not? and for pride and contention, as they and a thousand worse evils could not but fall out in a church gathered as yours is, of all the profane rabble in a kingdom, so when they do arise in a true church, there is power to void them out, and the persons with them, in whom they reign. But if the unlawfulness of a church government might be proved by the pride, contention, and the like evils arising in it, then surely, Mr. B., you that know so well how these and other mischiefs reign in your own, should lay your hand on your mouth for shame, and be afraid to provoke any man to meddle in that matter. Besides it is apparent both in the Scriptures, and ecclesiastical writers, that not only pride, and contention, but heresy, and almost all other evils have sprung from the officers, and governors in the church. And surely nothing hath more in former days advanced, nor doth at this day more uphold the throne of Antichrist, than the people's discharging themselves of the care of public affairs in the church, on the one side: and the priests, and prelates arrogating all to themselves on the other side.

Lastly, The word church, you say, must be "expounded figuratively to avoid the absurdities, which else would necessarily follow out of the text, viz.: that the whole church must speak jointly, which were confusion contrary to 1 Cor. xiv. 40, that women must meddle in church affairs, which the apostle forbids, ver. 34, that children must speak, which were impossible: so then it must needs be taken figuratively, the part for the whole, and if one part must be left out, why not another, till the chief of the congregation be taken, who are chosen by the rest as their mouth."

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Touching the exception of confusion, I desire the reader to remember what hath been formerly answered: adding further, that Mr. B. herein doth not oppose us but the apostles, and apostolical churches governed by them, yea the Holy Ghost itself propounding their examples for our imitation. The apostle Peter, Acts i. 15, &c., standing up in the midst of the disciples, which were about an hundred and twenty, spake to them about the choice of one to succeed Judas: and it is said, ver. 23, that they, that is, these brethren to whom he spake, presented two: as also that the whole multitude, Acts vi. 5, presented the seven for deacons to the twelve apostles, who are said, ver. 2, to have called the multitude, and to have spoken unto them, and ver. 6, to have prayed, and laid hands on the elect deacons.

Now might not any profane spirit take up Mr. B.'s words, and insult over the Holy Ghost himself, and say: What! did all the disciples that were in the place, an hundred and twenty, present Joseph, and Matthias? They must needs speak in presenting these two, and spake they jointly, or all at once? this were confusion contrary to 1 Cor. xiv. 14; did the women speak? they must not meddle in church matters, ver. 34; did children speak? it is impossible. So for Acts vi., did all the twelve apostles speak at once, ver. 2, and pray at once, ver. 6; did the whole multitude speak jointly, when they presented the seven deacons ver. 6, here were the like confusion; and besides here were women, and children in the church also. Now let the indifferent reader judge, what Mr. B. hath said more against us, than any Lucian or scoffing atheist might object against the Spirit of God himself, and his holy penman the evangelist.

Yea, further, by these and the like consequences, women and children are utterly excluded from the church, as no parts of it.

Luke saith, Acts xv. 22, that the whole church sent messengers to Antioch; and Paul, 1 Cor. xiv. 23, speaks of the whole churches coming together in one to exercise themselves in prayer, prophesying, and the like parts of church communion; but children neither could send messengers, nor pray, nor prophesy, nor the like, and women might not speak in the church; and therefore

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both they must be left out of the church, and if one part why not another, and so till we come to the chief of the congregation, that they alone may be the church, and all in all? and as it is just with God, that he which opposeth the truth, should oppose himself also, so doth Mr. B. in this very place entangle himself in the same absurdities, wherein he would ensnare us. First, he affirms the church, Matt. xviii. must be the principal of the congregation. Then Mr. B. is not your congregation the true church of Christ, for the principal of your church, namely yourself, hath no power to excommunicate. And say not for shame, the archdeacon or official are principals or less principals of your congregation.

Again, which is the chief thing I desire may be observed, you say, these principals must be chosen by the rest of the church, and be their mouth, and stand for the whole. And how chosen? must the whole church speak jointly when they choose them? that were confusion. Must women speak? that is contrary to the Scriptures. Yet are they members of the congregation, and so are young youths, children, and servants. I add further, the church you say, is two or three principal members. Well then, they two or three must speak to the party, how can he else hear? but for two or three to speak together, is confusion, and contrary to the commandment, 1 Cor. xiv. 31, for all must speak by one and one.

And by this time, I hope you are ashamed of such trifling as here you use.

I do therefore answer in few words: it is not necessary that every one of the people should speak to the offender, no, nor of the officers neither. If but one officer do sufficiently evince, and reprove the party, what needs more speak? The rest both officers and people, may manifest their consent either by voice, sign, or silence, yet so as liberty be preserved for any in place, and order, to speak, either by way of addition, limitation, or dissent. And for women, they are debarred by their sex, as from ordinary prophesying, so from any other dealing wherein they take authority over the man, 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35; 1 Tim. ii. 11, 12, yet not simply from speaking: they may make profession of faith, or confession of sin, say amen to the

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church's prayers, sing psalms vocally, accuse a brother of sin, witness an accusation, or defend themselves being accused, yea, in a case extraordinary, namely where no man will, I see not but a woman may reprove the church, rather than suffer it to go on in apparent wickedness, and communicate with it therein. Now for children, and such as are not of years of discretion, God and nature dispenseth with them, as for not communicating in the Lord's Supper now, so under the law for not offering sacrifices, from which none of years were exempted; neither is there respect of persons with God in the common duties of Christianity.

And for that so oft re-enforced objection of authority given to two or three, and therefore not to all, I have answered and do, that to two, or three, and yet to all, when there are but two or three in all, as usually comes to pass in the raising, and dispersing of churches.

The word Church used Figuratively.

Your sixth argument to prove that "the word church must be taken figuratively is first that else the Corinthians had offended, who being all commanded did but some of them proceed against the incestuous person, 1 Cor. v. 13; 2 Cor. ii. 6. 2. That else Paul had offended, who upon the complaint of Chloe's house did himself, without waiting for the church's consent, being absent, judge and determine the matter, and sent to them to execute his sentence."

These two arguments, Mr. B., are in your hands like the two witnesses that came against Christ, they neither agree one with another, nor either of them with the truth. In the former you plead for the presbytery in saying that some of them did proceed against him, in the latter you utterly overthrow that, and step in for the bishops' sole power where you make Paul alone judge and determiner of the business. I am verily persuaded Mr. Smyth* hath felt your pulse in this place, and found directly what blood runs in your veins; to him therefore do I leave you for judgment in the case.

* Vide Parallels, Censures, and Observations, by John Smyth, p. 64.

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And for answer to the particulars.

In the first argument you do most sinfully corrupt the Scriptures, knowing that if they be soundly alleged, they will give no countenance to your error. For where Paul saith, "It is sufficient for the same man that he was rebuked of many," 2 Cor. ii. 6, you for the word many put some: where some doth import a part, and but a part, for where some are said to do a thing, it follows, that other some do it not, where the word many is ofttimes put for all, as being opposed to one or a few, as in this place, many rebuking to one rebuked. Take for this phrase of speech these scriptures, Dan. xii. 2; Matt. xiii. 17; Luke xii. 7; Rom. v. 19; viii. 29; xii. 4, 5; 1 Cor. x. 17; xii. 12, 14.

But mark I pray thee, wise reader, when this man expounds Matt. xviii. 19, 20, where mention is made of a few two or three having the power of Christ, there by two or three are meant the officers, and Christ hath established the authority of a few for the good of all, and, again, two or three officers, and a few, have this authority: and yet notwithstanding, when he comes to expound 2 Cor. ii. 6, where mention is made of many rebuking the offender, thereby many must be meant the officers also, pp. 95, 98.

What, Mr. B., are two or three officers, in respect of the whole body, many? Doth the Holy Ghost speaking of a few in the church, mean the officers, and speaking of many, mean the officers also? It were good you awoke out of your dream, that you might spy your contradictions, and how one piece reproves another.

To the objection I do answer, that first, It doth not appear that the party was excommunicated, it may be upon admonition he repented, and so the extremity spoken of, 1 Cor. v. 5, was prevented: and 2. If he were, either by many may be meant all, as I have formerly showed, or otherwise it is sufficient if some reprove, the elders or some of them, specially, by their office, and so of the brethren in the second place, if they see necessary cause; whereupon with the silent consent of the rest, judgment may be given, or the party delivered to Satan.

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Opinion of Reformers respecting Church Authority.

The seventh reason to prove the elders the church, is, "the judgment and practice of all reformed churches."

As the reformed churches do abhor from your practice, as intolerable, yea almost incredible, that the power of excommunication should be in the hands of one man, and that a foreign prelate, or official, that most like never so much in his life as once came in the congregation whereof the offender is a member, as may be seen in one for all, Beza, Epist. 12, so because you will needs thus bear over all with all the reformed churches, I will a little step out of my beaten way, and call in a few, well-deserving audience, of the reformed churches to testify what their judgment is in the case, joining unto them also a few of our own men seeming to be of the same mind, whatsoever the practice is either of the one or of the other.

To omit then the judgment and practice of the more ancient times, whether whole councils, or particular persons, (as of the Council of Nice, where Paphuntius, no church officer, both had and used such liberty of speech, as he persuaded the whole assembly touching the marriage of ministers; of Tertullian before that, who in Apol. chap. 39, makes the officers only presidents in the assembly where manners are censured: of Cyprian who would never do anything in his charge without the consent of the people, lib. 3, epist. 10, and in particular thinks it, specially the people's right to choose or reject worthy, or unworthy ministers, than which what power is greater? of Austin, that thinks it helps much to the shaming of the party, that he be excommunicated by the whole church, lib. 3, contra epist. Parmen; and lastly of Jerome ad Demetrius, which affirms that the church itself hath right in excommunication, as the elders have in other church censures,) the first is Zuinglius, who, art. 8, explanat. speaking of the contention which hath been what a church is, acknowledges none other churches but 1. The company of sure and firm believers scattered through the universal world, which we call the Catholic Church; and 2. Several congregations which conveniently meet together in some one place, &c., and of these he affirms Christ to speak,

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Matt. xviii., "Tell the church;" and Paul, 1 Cor. i., "To the church which is at Corinth." And answering an objection touching a church representative he saith, "Of this I find nothing in the Scriptures: out of men's devices any man may feign anything."

Next Peter Martyr, in his Loci. Com. part 4, chap. 5, sect. 9, making the church a monarchy in respect of Christ, an aristocracy in respect of the elders, addeth also that because in the church there are matters of great weight, and importance referred unto the people, as excommunication, absolution, of choosing ministers, and the like, it hath also a consideration of popular government: see also his Comment. upon 1 Cor. v. 4. The apostle as great as he was would not excommunicate alone, but did take counsel with the church that the thing might be done by common authority. Which notwithstanding the Pope, and other bishops dare do. The apostle indeed goes before the rest, which is the duty of the ancients of the church that the more ignorant multitude by their suffragation before going, may be directed in judging.

With him join Bucer, who in his first book, chap. 9, de regno Christi, affirms that Paul accuses the Corinthians, for that the whole church had not excommunicated the incestuous person.

Bastingius in the fourth place, question 85, of his Catechism* speaking of the difference between the two keys that of preaching, and the other of discipline, places it in this, that the former which is of the preaching of the gospel is committed to the ministers, the other, because it pertains to the discipline of excommunication, is permitted to the whole church.

Lastly, Even Beza himself, how strait soever he be to the multitude in this case, hardly granting them the liberty, which Mr. B. page 93, yea, which the very Jesuits† do, namely that they were with the elders gathered together in the name of the Lord Jesus, 1 Cor. v. 4; yea, and do plainly deny it in his annotations upon 2 Cor. ii. 6. Yet upon ver. 8, he is constrained to affirm, that Paul entreats

* A Commentary on the Palatine Catechism. By Jer. Bastingius, translated by John Legat. 4to., Camb. 1589.

† Maldonatus in Matt. xviii. in Comment. in iv. Evangelistas.

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that the incestuous person might by the public consent of the church be declared a brother, as he was by the church's public consent cast out.

Now to these special lights in the reformed churches abroad, I will annex a few of the chief endeavourers of reformation at home.

The first of them is Mr. Hooper,* who in his Apology writes, "that excommunication should be by the bishop and the whole parish, and that Paul's consent, and the whole church with him did excommunicate the incestuous man."

To him add Mr. Fox, whose judgment in the book of Martyrs, pages 5—7, is, and so is enforced by him that wrote "The discovery of D. Bancroft's untruth, and slanders against the reformation," that every visible church, or congregation, hath the power of binding and loosing annexed to it. If it be said the church hath it, if the officers have it: I see not but it may be as well said, the church hath the Scriptures in a known tongue, if the officers so enjoy them.

Thirdly, Mr. Cartwright in his reply to Dr. Whitgift's answer†, page 147, both affirms, and proves, that Paul both understanding, and observing the rule of our Saviour Christ, communicates this power of excommunication with the church. Him also, another writing "A Demonstration of Discipline,"‡ allegeth, adding further that they which were met together, 1 Cor. v. 4, 5, were to excommunicate the incestuous person, with whom also consorteth he that wrote of "the certain form of ecclesiastical government," § who under the head of the authority of the ministers of the Word that by the church Matt. xviii. Christ means a particular congregation, the pastors, elders, and people

* An Apology against the untrue and slanderous report made of him, that he should be a maintainer and encourager of such that cursed Queen Mary. London, 1565, 8vo.

† A Replie to an Answer made by M. Doctor Whitgift, 4to. 1573.

‡ Chap. xix. p. 83. Supposed to be written by John Udal, the celebrated Puritan, and for which he was tried and condemned to the gallows. He was reprieved, but died a short time afterwards in prison.

§ Vide A parte of a Register, &c., pp. 425, 426, without date.

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consenting, making that the judgment of the particular congregation which is spoken of 1 Cor. v. 12.

In the fourth place Mr. Jacob in his book to the king for reformation,* page 28, pleads for the people's consent and voice-giving in elections, and excommunication: to whom I join them that made the "Christian Offer" to justify against the bishops, and their adherents, that every ordinary assembly of the faithful, hath by Christ's ordinance, power in itself immediately under Christ, to elect, and ordain, deprive, and depose their ministers, and to execute all other ecclesiastical censures. Proposition 5, and Proposition 8,† that the officers can do no material ecclesiastical act without the free consent of the congregation.

Lastly, The godly ministers in the end of Mr. Bernard's book, page 180, do directly judge against him, interpreting the church, Matt. xviii., to be a particular congregation, and excommunication the judgment, and censure of that particular congregation whereof the offender is a member.

Thus have I been constrained by the bold boasting and facing which this man useth, of and with the judgment of all reformed churches, to set down the judgments of some few amongst many both at home, and abroad for his conviction; though I desire the touchstone of the Holy Scriptures alone may try all differences betwixt him and me. I now return to Mr. Bernard where I left him: and so come to two reasons he annexeth pages 98, 99, to prove the officers to be called the church: the former is, because it is an usual speech to put the name of the whole upon the part, and this to be taken for the whole. The second, because a company is no where called a church in the New Testament, but where they have officers.

The latter of these I have formerly confuted.‡ Only I add one thing upon occasion of these words a "church in the New Testament," that as there is but one body or church, Eph. iv. 4, and we under the New Testament that one, or the

* Reasons taken out of God's Word, &c. vide p. 17, *supra*, note.

† A Christian and Modest Offer, &c. Ib.

‡ Vide pp. 133, 134, *supra*.

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same body or church with the Jews in the old, chap. iii. 6, so if the ministry made the church, how much more if it were the church, could it not be, that the Jews and we should be one church, for I shall never be brought to believe, nor, I think will any man affirm it, that the ministry of an apostle, or elder now, is the same in nature with the ministry of a sacrificing Levite under the law. We are by faith sons and daughters of Abraham, Luke xix. 9, and partakers of the covenant and promises, and by faith grafted in their holy root, Rom. xi. 16, 20, and in this stands our oneness with them, but neither in the ministry, nor in the government, nor in any other ordinance which are but manners of dispensing that covenant, and those divers and changeable, where the covenant is nothing less.

And for the former of your reasons, howsoever the place you bring, Acts xv. 3, proves no such matter, yet is the thing true you say, namely that a part of the church is sometimes called by the name of the whole; but what part? not the officers, but the brethren, the saints, as being the matter (an essential cause) of the church; the elders not so, as being but for the assistance, and well-being of it. And so the church gives both being, and denomination to the elders, but not the elders to the church; which is never called the church of the elders, as they are called the elders of the church, Acts xx. 17, and so are of it, and not it of them.

That which you add of inconveniences, and discommodities following upon your doctrine not to be regarded is frivolous, except by them you mean, absurdities, and in consequence *ta aloga in theologia*, as they call them, and then they are to be regarded, as never necessarily following upon any truth: for the truth brings forth no error by true consequence.

The Confusion incident to Popular Authority.

The sixth reason, of the superior order, followeth, (for Mr. B. hath his reasons and his under reasons,) which is,

"In itself, the multitude being ever unconstant, it is instability, unorderliness, where every one is alike equal,

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it is the nurse of confusion, the mother of schism, the breeder of contention."

These very same things have been formerly objected by you in the fourth part of your fifth argument, and there cleared. The truth is, the drawing of all power into the officers' hands, breeds in them pride and arrogancy, and in the people ignorance and security.

And for your contemptuous upbraiding of God's people in this book, with inconstancy, instability, pride, contention, and the like evils, but specially in your second book, where with a scurrilous, and profane spirit you nickname them, Symon the saddler, Tomkin the tailor, Billy the bellowsmaker, as you show whose child you are, John vii. 48, 49, in so speaking, so doth the Spirit of God give another testimony of them, Acts ii. 41, 42; Phil. i. 6, 7; 1 Thess. iii. 5—8; 1 Pet. i. 7, 8. Indeed, as I formerly said, no marvel though such multitudes, as yours are, be unstable and variable, and ready to change their religion with their prince, yea though it be to Popery, as appeared in Queen Mary's days, universally, scarce one of ten thousand excepted: only the mischief was, that the prelates and priests were as unstable as the rest; yea, their ringleaders also.

But for ourselves, Mr. B., and that whereof we take experience in this our popularity, as you term it, I tell you, that if ever I saw the beauty of Sion, and the glory of the Lord filling his tabernacle, it hath been in the manifestation of the divers graces of God in the church, in that heavenly harmony, and comely order, wherein by the grace of God we are set and walk: wherein, if your eyes had but seen the brethren's sober and modest carriage one towards another, their humble, and willing submission unto their guides, in the Lord, their tender compassion towards the weak, their fervent zeal against scandalous offenders, and their long-suffering towards all, you would, I am persuaded, change your mind, and be compelled to take up your parable, and bless, where you purposed to curse, as Balaam did. Numb. xxiii. But whatsoever you, and all others do, these our experimental comforts neither you, nor any other shall take from us.

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The Duty of the Church towards its Officers.

Your seventh and eighth reasons are of one nature, and may for brevity sake be contracted into one: the sum whereof is, that the sheep, and flock are to obey, and depend upon their shepherd, Heb. xiii. 17; 1 Pet. v. 2; the children to be subject to their father, 1 Cor. iv. 15; the work to be ordered by the workman, 1 Cor. iv. 12; the corn by the seedsman, and not the contrary: and there cannot be showed in the Old or New Testament any example, that ever the people had command over their pastors, or power to cast them out.

These things are popular, and may deceive the simple, and credulous, but though the fool believe everything, yet the prudent will consider his steps. Prov. xiv. 15.

We deny not then, but the flock both severally and jointly is to obey them that have the oversight of them, Heb. xiii. 17, to know them, and to have them in singular love, 1 Thess. v. 12, 13; but it must be, in the Lord, and for their works' sake: and wherein they watch for their souls, as is expressed in the same places. But what now if the officers will reign besides the Lord? if their works be such, as deserve hatred, and not love? if instead of watching for the people's souls, they take a course, either to starve them through negligence, or to poison them with heresy, or evil life? must they still obey them? or hath the church no remedy against them? The churches of Galatia were bound to receive, and submit unto such ministers as brought the doctrine of Christ; and yet if any man, Gal. i. 9, yea though he were an apostle, or above an apostle, should bring any other doctrine they were to hold him accursed, Deut. vii. 26, and so to cast him away as an accursed thing. The Colossians were bound to obey Archippus in the lawful execution of his ministry, and yet they might say unto him, Look to thy ministry, Col. iv. 17, and if they might so admonish him, certainly they might go further with him if there were cause. The pilot is to guide the ship, and all that are in it, yea, though the king himself be there, but if he either ignorantly or desperately will run upon the sands, he may be displaced by his passengers, and the fittest put in his room, as I have

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formerly observed. Now not only the church is commonly and fitly compared to a ship, but the very word used, κυβερνήσεις, 1 Cor. xii. 28, for the government of the church, is borrowed from the government and guidance of a ship in the original. And if nature teach this liberty, in bodily danger, how much greater liberty doth the Lord give in the spiritual danger, both of soul, and body also! And your question of examples for the people's casting out their officers, is frivolous, if there be a commandment or rule for it. What example have you, but grounds, for the baptizing of infants? Or where read you of any officer excommunicated by any? And certainly if the body of the church may not cast out the pastor for obstinate sin, no person nor persons upon earth may do it.

But the vanity of your opinion I do thus manifest.

1. You affirm, page 88, that to separate from, is all one in substance with, to excommunicate, though called by a name less odious. Whence it followeth that if the body of the church may not excommunicate their officers, they may not separate from them, no, not though they prove Papists or Atheists, or never so abominable. Oh the hellish bondage wherein these men would enthral the Lord's people to their destruction!

2. If the congregation may choose and elect their governors, then they may reject and reprobate them: for they that set up may pull down, but this liberty, as strait as you are to the multitude, you yourself grant them, page 97, and if you denied it, the Scriptures assure it them. Acts i. 15—26; vi. 1—4; xiv. 23.

But if in these words, the people have no command over their pastors, nor power to cast them out, you would intimate, that they might depose them but not excommunicate them, it would nothing avail you. For as it were a strange thing, that men should have no command over their servants, as I have ofttimes showed the church-officers to be the church-servants, so were it as strange, if the putting of servants out of their office, should not argue power over them. And besides deposition, if any such ordinance be to be used in the church, is not of persons obstinate in sin, but of such as having by gross idolatry, or some other notorious crime, so scandalously fallen, as they cannot be

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retained in their ministry, with the safety and credit of the church and gospel, no, not though they repent; but, notwithstanding their repentance, and continuance in the church upon the same, they are to be disseized* of their ministry, and to bear their iniquity and shame. Ezek. xliv. 10, 12, 13. But this is nothing to men obstinate in sin, who may not upon their deposition be continued in the church; and to deal with them anew for the sin, for which they have been formerly censured, or to censure them twice for one sin, is an idle and unwarrantable course. They are therefore to be cast out by the people, and so under their excommunication, is their deprivation comprehended.

3. If the pastor, and so of the rest of the officers, be a brother in the church, as all God's children are the saints' brethren, Matt. xxiii. 8, then must the church not suffer sin to rest upon him, but must admonish him, and if he remain obstinate, cast him out. Lev. xix. 17. For the Lord Jesus subjects every brother indefinitely, and without respect of persons, to this censure. Matt. xviii. 17; 1 Cor. v. 11—13. From which last scripture another argument of the same nature may be drawn, which is, that if the pastor, and so of the other officers, be within, and not without, and under the Lord's judgment, then are they under the judgment of the church "gathered together in the name of our Lord Jesus," which you confess to be the multitude, page 92; yea I see not how the pastor or officers may be admonished by the church, if they may not be cast out, or how the Colossians may say to Archippus, Take heed to thy ministry, Col. iv. 17, if they may not censure him, if he be heedless; for he that will not hear the church, must be excommunicated, or, which is a description of excommunication by an effect, must be accounted an heathen or publican.

4. They that are without and under the Lord's judgment, are exempted from the church's judgments, but they which are within the church must judge, 1 Cor. v. 12, 13: and therefore if the ministers be within, and not without, and under God's judgments, they must undergo the judgments of the church.

5. If the pastor, and the like reason is of the rest, may

* Dispossessed.

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not be excommunicated for sin by the church, then he and they want a means of salvation, which the brethren have, yea, the only solemn means of salvation in the case of obstinacy, to which they are as subject as any other, being frail men, as the rest. And the reason is, for that, as the preaching of the gospel, which is the one key of the kingdom, is the power of God to salvation unto them that believe, Rom. i. 17, so excommunication, being the other key, is, the power of our Lord Jesus for the destruction of the flesh, or humbling of the offender, that his soul might be saved. 1 Cor. v. 4, 5. Now what a miserable privilege this were, all men truly fearing God, will easily observe. And for mine own part, knowing mine own infirmities, and that I am subject to sin, yea, and to frowardness in sin, as much as the brethren are: if by mine office I should be deprived of the remedy which they enjoy, that blessed ordinance of the church's censures, I should think mine office accursed, and myself by it, as frustrating, and disappointing me of that main end, for which the servants of Christ ought to join themselves unto the church of Christ, furnished with his power for their reformation. And since the chief thing, which after the glory of God, the saints are to regard, is their salvation, and that their salvation is no way endangered, but by obstinate impenitency, and that obstinate impenitency hath none other solemn ordinance for remedy, but excommunication, what cause of sorrow had I for the want of this sovereign remedy, and means of salvation by mine office, which without it I might enjoy? As on the contrary, God is my record, how in the very writing of these things, my soul is filled with spiritual joy, that I am under this easy yoke of Christ, the censures of the church, whereof I am; and how much I am comforted in this very consideration, against my vile, and corrupt nature, which notwithstanding, I am persuaded the Lord will never so far suffer to rebel, as that it shall not be tamed, and subdued by this strong hand of God, without which it might every day and hour so hazard my salvation.

6. That doctrine which advanceth an inferior and meaner estate in the church, above that which is superior, and the chief, that is unsound, and indeed serving in a degree for the exaltation of that man of sin above all that

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is called God. 2 Thess. ii. 4. But this doctrine of Mr. B. setting the elders without and above the judgments and censures of the church, doth advance an inferior above a superior. *Ergo.*

The point then to be proved is, that the order of saints or saintship in the church, is an order superior unto, and above the order of officers, or of bishopric or eldership: which I thus manifest.

1. The order of servants is inferior to the order of them whose servants they are. But the order of church officers, is an order of servants, and they by their office to serve the people. 2 Chron. xxxv. 3; Numb. xvi. 9; Ezek. xliv. 11; 2 Cor. iv. 5. *Ergo.*

2. The order of kings is the highest order or estate in the church. But the order of saints is the order of kings, and we are kings as we are saints, not as we are officers. Ex. xix. 6; 1 Pet. ii. 9; Rev. i. 6. *Ergo.*

3. As the apostle proves the woman to be inferior unto, and less excellent than the man; 1. because the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man: and 2. because the man was not created for the woman's sake, but the woman for the man's sake, so by necessary consequence, and just proportion, it followeth, that the elders are inferior, and less excellent, than the church, as being both of, and for the church, and not the church of, nor for them. 1 Cor. xi. 7—9.

4. As the Lord Jesus did prove against the Scribes and Pharisees, that the temple was greater than the gold, because it sanctified the gold, and that the altar was greater than the offering, because it sanctified the offering, Matt. xxiii. 17, 19, so, by proportion, the condition of a saint which sanctifieth the condition of an officer, as our general calling doth our special calling, is more excellent and greater, than it is. To our saintship, and as we have faith, is promised the forgiveness of sins, the favour of God, and life eternal, but not to our office, or in respect of it. The estate of a saint is most happy and blessed, though the person never so much as come near an office, but on the contrary, an officer, if he be not also, and first, a saint, is a most wretched and accursed creature.

Infinite others are the reasons to disprove the pretended

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charter by which this popish clergy would exempt itself from the common condition of Christians, in the common Christian ordinances of the church, as though their office ate up their brotherhood, and their special calling of officers their general calling of Christians. And I cannot more fitly resemble this exemption of one or more officers, from the ecclesiastical censures, unto which one or so many brethren are subject being in the same sin, than to the like exemption or privilege, springing, as it seems, from the same root, in civil judgments, commonly called the benefit of clergy. For as by it a malefactor, if he can read *ut clericus*, as they speak, shall escape death which others do, and so he should, without that benefit, undergo: so by the benefit of clergy here, the person delinquent is freed from the dint of the spiritual sword, the censure of the church, which others do, and so he should, without that privilege, undergo, as well as they. Where methinks, it were more meet, as that he which can read, and so hath or may have greater knowledge should be the more severely punished civilly, so, that the officers in the church should undergo, if it were to be found, a heavier censure for their sin, as being both more scandalous, and less excusable: and so the Lord by Moses expressly manifests his will to be, in enjoining the priest a greater sacrifice, a bullock for his sin, where a goat, which was less, might serve in the like case for the sin of one of the people. Lev. iv. 3, 27, 28.

And this may well serve for a seventh reason to prove that the officers are by the law of God liable to as deep censures for sin, as the people, and so the pastor, as any one of the brethren.

Yet for the further and more full opening of the iniquity of those proud and popish exemptions, and exaltations of church officers, whereof from these scriptures alleged by Mr. B. and the like, they boast so much, and by which they affright and abuse the simple people, in all places, I will briefly as I can lay down certain such different respects and relations, under which the officers of the church do come, as being rightly understood, and justly applied, will give good light to the discovering of this mystery.

First, then, the officers of the church are to be considered in respect of the thing which they minister, and that is,

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the word, and revealed will of God, in which regard they are infinitely above and superior unto all men and angels, Gal. i. 8, and in the very stead of Christ, and of God himself. 2 Cor. v. 19, 20. And in, for, and according to this message, or ambassage of God, and of Christ, they are absolutely and simply to be obeyed, as is the meanest officer about the king, carrying with him his warrant and authority, by the greatest peer in the kingdom.

In the second place they must be considered of us, in respect of their office, by virtue whereof they do administer. And in this regard they are inferior unto the church, as being by it called to a place of ministry to serve the church, and not of lordship to reign over it.

The third consideration they undergo, is, in regard of their persons, and as they are brethren, saints, Christians, for they cease not to be Christians because they are ministers, but must manifest their general calling in their special, partakers of the same common graces, and subject to the same common infirmities with the rest: and in this respect they are equal with the brethren, standing in need of the same means both for their edification and reformation, and so particularly, of the censures for their humiliation, if they be so far left of God, as they may be, and ofttimes are, as they will not otherwise be reclaimed. And I had as lief you should tell me, that, because the deacons are to distribute the church's alms, therefore the church is not to relieve them, though they be in danger to starve bodily, as that because the elders are to minister the church's judgments, none must judge them, though they be through impenitency in danger to perish spiritually.

Now for the particulars, which Mr. B. objecteth: it is true, the people are sheep, but not the ministers', but the Lord's sheep. Ezek. xxxiv. 6, 8—31, neither are these sheep for the ministers, as the natural sheep for their shepherds, but for the Lord, and the shepherds for them. The people are indeed a house, but not the officers' house, but the Lord's house, for him to dwell in. Eph. ii. 20, 21; 1 Tim. iii. 15.

Secondly, the people are sheep, yet not unreasonable beasts, but men, Ezek. xxxiv. 31, so to be looked to by the shepherds, as they are also to look to themselves. Acts xx.

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28; Luke xvii. 3. They are so a house, as they consist not of dead, but of living stones, 1 Pet. ii. 5, so built up by the officers, as they are also to build up themselves, Jude 20. And which is especially to be minded for the purpose in hand, the officers are so shepherds, as they are also themselves sheep, if they be not goats. Matt. xxv. 37; Luke xii. 32; Rom. viii. 36. They are so fathers as they are also brethren, Matt. xxiii. 8; Acts i. 16; 2 Cor. viii. 23, yea, as they are sons also, in a sense as the Levite was in sundry respects both Micah's father and his son. Jud. xvii. 1—11. They are so workmen, or builders, as they are also part of the house, Eph. ii. 22; 2 Tim. ii. 20, so seedsmen, as themselves are also seed, and a part of the harvest. Matt. xiii. 38.

These distinctions, rightly observed, will both teach the officers how to govern, and the people how to obey, and both officers and people how to preserve themselves, and one another, under the power of Christ given to his church.

And where you demand in this place, by way of digression, how a few of us become a church, we answer in a word, by coming out of Babylon, through the mercies of God, and building ourselves into a new and holy temple unto the Lord. But where you affirm the ministry, that is, the office of ministry, or the word so ministered, to be the Lord's only ordinary means to plant churches, or to urge men to join unto them, you strengthen the Lord's hand, and wrong his people. When the woman of Samaria spake to her neighbours of Christ, and called them unto him, they both believed, and came, John iv. 28—30, 40; but had you been amongst them, it seems you would have done neither the one nor the other, except a minister had called you. I confess indeed the churches in England were very mannerly this way, and would not so much as forsake the Pope of Rome, till their mass-priests went before them, who being continued in their office, did by the attractive power of King Edward's proclamation at the first, and Queen Elizabeth's afterward, and by their statute laws, gather their parish churches unto them, under their service book, as the hen doth her chickens to be brooded under her wing. But the reformed churches were otherwise gathered than by popish priests continued over them:

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the people first separating themselves from idolatry, and so joining together in the fellowship of the gospel, were afterwards, when they had fit men, to call them into the office of ministry, and so they practised, as appears in the Epistle of Melancthon to the Teachers in Bohemia, in Dan. Tilenus's Answer to the Earl of Lavall: and in Peter Martyr upon the 4th of Judges.

It is true, indeed, that the Lord Jesus sent forth his apostles into the world, for the first planting of churches: though even in their times churches were planted and men turned to the Lord by the preaching of private brethren, Acts viii. 1, 4; xi. 19—21; and therefore Barnabas coming among them, is not said to have joined them unto the Lord, but to have exhorted them which were joined to continue with the Lord, ver. 23, and to have persuaded others to join themselves unto the Lord also, ver. 24, but that this course ordinary set by Christ, should be held in the replanting of churches after the universal apostasy of Antichrist, is a thing impossible. There were then no ministers, but popish priests; and are they the Lord's means, Mr. Bernard? Shall the man of sin be consumed by himself, or by the breath of the Lord's mouth? 2 Thess. ii. 3, 8. Are false ministers the Lord's ordinary means of planting churches? Or are popish mass-priests, or the popish bishops from whom they have their authority, and so the pope himself from whom they have theirs, true ministers? And is the church of Rome a true visible church? For it is not possible there should be a true ministry in a false church. These are the inconveniencies and discommodities Mr. Bernard speaks of, and by which he saith we would wring the truth from him. But it is certain, they are such plain demonstrations, as do evince his pretended truths of popish and popular errors.

And for the gathering of a church, Mr. B., I do tell you, that in what place soever, by what means soever, whether by preaching the gospel by a true minister, by a false minister, by no minister, or by reading, conference, or any other means of publishing it, two or three faithful people do arise, separating themselves from the world into the fellowship of the gospel, and covenant of Abraham, they are a church truly gathered though never so weak, a house

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and temple of God rightly founded upon the doctrine of the apostles and prophets, Christ himself being the corner stone, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail, nor your disgraceful invectives neither.

Indeed the Pharisees thought because they had Abraham for their father, and did descend of him by ordinary succession, and were the formal teachers of the church, that therefore God could not possibly cast them off, or have a church without them: even so it is with the pharisaical, formal clergy in Rome and England: they think that Christ hath so tied his power and presence unto their ceremony of succession, that without them he knows not how to do for a church, but must needs have it pass through their fingers. But as John Baptist told the old Pharisees, that God was able of the stones to raise up children unto Abraham, though they all, and every one of them, like unfruitful trees, should be cut down and cast into the fire, Matt. iii. 9, 10: so say I unto their children, the Pharisees of our time, that though the Lord reject them, and every one of them, for their apostasy and rebellion, yet can he by the seed of the word, cast with what hand soever, raise up unto Abraham children, unto himself a church. They that are of the faith of Abraham, they are the children and seed of Abraham, and within the covenant of Abraham, though but two or three, and so of the same church with him, by that covenant. Rom. iv. 12, 18; Gen. xii. 3; Gal. iii. 6, 7; viii. 15, 16, 17.

On Ministerial Dignity.

Your last argument, to prove the officers the church, Matt. xviii. and directly to disprove our supposed popularity, is, that it is against the dignity and office of the ministers, who represent Christ's person unto the congregation, 1 Cor. iv. 1, having authority from him to preach, administer the sacraments, use the censures, which none but such as represent him can give them, which the body of the people do not by office, nor take from them, &c.

This indeed is the thing: the dignity of priesthood is it which goes nearest you: and that you keep last, as Jacob did Benjamin, whom of all his sons he was lothest to part with, Gen. xlii. 4; xliii. 14. But first, if your meaning

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be, that the ministers by their office represent Christ in his office, it is little less then blasphemy; for Christ is the husband and mediator of his church, by his office, and herein not to be represented by any other man, or angel. The ministers, in publishing the gospel and word of reconciliation, are in Christ's stead, 2 Cor. v. 21, and therein to be obeyed as himself; but what if they speak the vision of their own heart, and publish heresy and false doctrine, or lead a scandalous and profane life? their office is no dispensation for them, neither are they now any longer in the stead of Christ, but of the devil, whom they resemble, as children their father, and are so to be reputed.

Besides, there is no force in your argument: because the body of the church represents not Christ by office, as the ministers do, therefore it is no way equal with the ministers, nor may meddle with them, but the contrary. May not a man as well argue thus? because the wife no way represents her husband in office, for she is in no office, the same may be said of the children, as the steward and the bailiff do, therefore the wife is no way superior unto them: she may not reprove or displace them in her husband's absence, what evil soever they do in their office, or persons, but on the contrary, they may rebuke her, and turn her out of doors, and her children with her, if there be cause. For they represent the master in office, she not. Now we know well the church is the wife and spouse of Christ, and the ministers, stewards. Cant. iii. 9, 10; Eph. v. 29, 30, 32; 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2.

Thus having cleared the way of such objections as wherewith Mr. Bernard would stumble the reader, I come in the next place, as I have formerly ordered my course, to declare that the church, Matt. xviii. 17, is not the officers, but the whole body meeting together for the public worship of God, and that 1 Corinthians v. proves the same by practice, which is in the former place enjoined by rule.

Only I must needs, by the way, make a step into his second book, pages 177—181, amongst his score of reasons there against popularity, and so remove, as it were, with my foot, such of them as are tumbled in by him to make rough the plain ways of the Lord. And they are as the author numbers them, the 7th, 12th, 13th, 17th, 18th.

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Further Objections.

The 7th reason is, that if a sort of persons professing Christ together, without officers, have the power of such officers in themselves, they may do all the officers may do, page 178.

We say not that the church hath the power of the officers, but the power of Christ, as is expressly affirmed, 1 Cor. v. 4, 5; and second, it follows not, that because the church hath the power of Christ for all things, therefore it can enjoy all things without officers. The power is one thing, which is inseparable from the body, the use of the power another thing, which in many cases it may want. Civil corporations have the king's power and charter, as well without as with officers, and yet it may be there are liberties in their charter they cannot enjoy without officers: they have therefore power for officers also, which they may choose, and so enjoy all their liberties by their help: so in the spiritual corporation, the church, there is always the whole power of Christ residing, which therefore may call officers for the use of it; to which it is sufficient, that it can without officers use this power for things simply necessary, as for the receiving in of members by profession of faith, and confession of sins; for the edifying of them by exhortations, and comforts in the ordinance of prophesying, and so for casting them out by excommunication, which fall from their former profession, or confession.

The sum of the 11th and 12th reasons is, that this power or liberty of the multitude to judge in church matters, overthrows the power and authority of Christian magistrates in the church, to whom the people are commanded to be subject both in the Old and New Testament.

And doth not the ill-advised man consider that his own opinion, making the officers of the church alone the church, and giving them power to judge in church matters without the rest of the body, doth as much overthrow the authority of Christian magistrates, as ours, in making the officers and body with them the church, having power to judge together? yea much more: for if the ecclesiastical officers alone be the church, Matthew xviii., and so must judge and censure sins (which is the thing he pleads

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for), then is the civil magistrate simply excluded: where we reputing the whole body, the church, do necessarily include the Christian magistrate, as being one of the church.

Secondly, is Mr. B. and his brother Bell, whom he quotes in the margin, page 177, so ignorant, as they cannot distinguish betwixt civil authority, and judgments in church matters, and that authority and those judgments which are ecclesiastical? The Christian magistrate, as he is a brother, may be censured ecclesiastically by the church whereof he is a member: and yet the same person as a magistrate, whether of the church or not of the church, or cast out of the church, may censure, and punish civilly, the whole church, and every member of it, if there be cause, whether in matters of the church or commonwealth.

In the 17th reason Mr. B. would fasten upon us an absurdity, in making the body both to govern and to be governed, and so to be both lord and servant, prince and subject, &c.

It is yourself, Mr. B., that commits the absurdity which I thus manifest.

The church must be governed, saith the Scripture and common sense.

But the church is the officers, Matthew xviii., saith Mr. Bernard.

Whereupon it followeth that the officers must be governed.

And to your reason, whomsoever you count lords, and servants, and whosoever are lords, and servants in your church, I know by the Scriptures that in the church of Christ, the officers are servants, and in that relation the church may be called a lord, 2 Cor. iv. 5; and if Christ truly call the son of man, the lord of the sabbath, because the sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath, Mark ii. 27, 28; may we also call the church in a respect, lord of the officers, for the officers are for the church, and not the church for them.

And yet we hold the same officers which are servants, to be governors also, for the government of the church is merely a church-service, as all, not carnally blinded with ambition or superstition, will grant with me.

Now where you affirm, reason 18, that the people are

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never termed by any name insinuating sovereignty, but that the ministers are, you speak partially on both sides; would you have the ministers, that is, the servants of the church, to be her sovereigns? The names you bring as most advantageable, argue no such thing. They are overseers, as the watchmen are for the city: elders for their gravity: fathers in respect of the seed of the word by which they beget to conversion, and therefore Paul makes himself the only father of the Corinthians, because he had been the instrument of their conversion, notwithstanding all other teachers whomsoever, to whom in that respect he opposeth himself, as not being their fathers, 1 Cor. iv. 15. And, so men out of office may be as well the fathers of others, as they in office. However, fatherhood argues no sovereignty. And yet the holy apostles and prophets thought not much upon all occasions, to account the saints their brethren, and themselves theirs. And I would you wist, whose names John Bale in his paraphrase upon the Revelation, chap. xvii. ver. 3, thought your grace, your lordship, your fatherhood, to be. And where further you name the brethren sheep, the household of faith, the wife or spouse in respect of the officers, for that is the consideration in hand, therein you deal very deceitfully; for the brethren or saints are not the officers' sheep, household, wife, or spouse, but Christ's: betwixt whom and them the comparison is not.

Lastly, your affirmation that the saints are called kings, Revelation i. 6, not for any outward power over men, but for the inward power of God's Spirit sanctifying the elect, by which, as kings, they rule over their own corruptions, is an ill gloss corrupting the text. For in the same place, they are called priests also. Now as they are not priests only for themselves, but for their brethren, for whom they are to offer up the spiritual sacrifices of prayer and thanksgiving: so neither are they kings for themselves alone, but for their brethren also, having the power of Christ whereby to judge them, the keys of the kingdom to bind and loose them, in the order by him prescribed. 1 Cor. v. 4, 12; Matt. xvi. 19.

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On Excommunication by the Church, and not by Officers.

These things thus laid down occasionally, I return to the point. And first: against the figurative exposition of these words, Tell the church, I do allege two approved rules and canons in divinity, for exposition of scriptures. The former is, that scriptures must be expounded according to the largest extent of the words, except there be some apparent restraint of them. The second is, that they must be expounded simply, and according to the letter, except necessity compel to depart from the literal sense to a figurative. And therefore since there appears not any such necessity, as is pretended, either of figure or restraint, the words must be taken in their largest and simplest meaning.

With these rules, I desire the reader to bear in mind that which hath been formerly observed to the purpose in hand, and amongst other things, that the officers are to govern the church, in the censures, as in all other actions of communion, and therefore cannot be the church; that every true church hath, or is capable of, a ministry over it, and so there should be a minister of ministers: that the order of officers in the church is an order of servants, and the order of saints an order of kings, which is the highest order in the church, sitting upon the thrones of David for judgment, whom the ministers are to serve in guiding and going before them, in and in ministering of their judgments. And so I go on.

2. The rule prescribed, Matt. xviii., concerns all the visible churches in the world: since the power of excommunication is an essential property, one of the keys of the kingdom, the only solemn ordinance in the church, for the humbling and saving of an obstinate offender, and as necessary as the power to receive in members; without which a church cannot be gathered, or consist. And therefore the officers cannot be the church there spoken of, since true churches may, and do, want officers, as I have formerly proved.

3. If two or three officers be the church. Matt. xviii.. then may they, two or three, excommunicate the whole body, though it consist of a thousand persons: for what brother,

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or brethren soever, will not hear the church there spoken of, he or they are to be accounted as heathens and publicans. Yea, I add, if the power of excommunication be tied to the office, since the office may remain in one, I see not but one may do any work of his office, and so as well excommunicate, as admonish, preach, minister the sacraments and the rest. Now whether this power in one or two, to punish judicially one or two thousand, be not lordly at the least, let the reader judge.

4. Further, if the officers be the church, I would know, if one of them fall into scandalous sin, and will not be reclaimed, what must then be done. It will be answered, that the rest must censure him. But what if there be but two in all, must the one excommunicate the other? the ruling elder, it may be, the pastor? 2. If the rest of the elders, being many, may displace the pastor by their authority, they may also place him, and set him up by their authority, and so the poor laity is stripped of all liberty or power of choosing their officers, contrary both to the Scriptures, and your own grant.

5. If the officers be the church, then they alone may excommunicate a brother without the consent, yea, or the privity of any of the brethren: for the business concerns none but the church, Matt. xviii., neither need they so much as acquaint any others with it. But so absurd is this, as you yourself grant the contrary (page 92, upon 1 Cor. iii. 5); and that it must be done with the knowledge of the church publicly, and when the body meets together in open assembly.

6. The apostles themselves, whom no ministers now can equal either for skill or authority, did not thus engross all things into their own hands, but did interest the people, though raw, and newly come to the faith, in all the public affairs of the church, and in such deliberations as arose about them. And who should deny them to meddle in those things which concern them? but if any do, these scriptures avow their liberty: Acts i. 15, 23, 26; vi. 2, 5; xi. 2, 3, 18; xv. 3, 4; xiv. 21, 22, 30, 31; xxi. 22; Rom. xvi. 17; 1 Cor. v. 4; xvi. 3; 2 Cor. viii. 19, 23, 24.

Now, there is nothing that more concerns the body of the church, than the excommunication of a brother, whether

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we respect the commandment of God, binding them not to suffer sin upon a brother, but to rebuke him plainly, and to admonish him, that being rebuked by many he may be humbled, and drawn to repentance: or the credit of the church, which must be defended against the slanders of the excommunicants, which will ever be just in their own cause: or their own good, that by the rebuking of one, all may learn to fear: or their conscience, who must to-day avoid him as a heathen, and limb of Satan, whom yesterday they were to embrace as a brother and member of Christ. How clearly these things plead the brethren's both liberty and interest in all this business, let the indifferent reader judge. Lev. xix. 17; 1 Thess. v. 14; 2 Cor. ii. 6; 1 Tim. v. 20.

7. If the officers alone be the church, to which offenders are to be brought, and by which they are to be judged, then are they as the church to admonish and judge those offenders, either apart from the body, or in the face of the public congregation: but neither of these two ways; and therefore they alone are not the church. Not in private, or apart, for,

First. Then may the pastor be excommunicated before any one of the brethren know of it. Of which evil I have spoken formerly.

Second. It is against the nature of the ordinance, being a part of the public communion of the church, and worship of God, to be performed but publicly. Yea there is no reason why admonitions and censures should be administered less publicly than doctrine and prayer. For the kingdom of the Lord Jesus is as glorious as his priesthood, or prophetical office: and his throne is to be advanced as high, and made as conspicuous to the eyes of all, as his altar, or pulpit, that I may so speak. Now as the priestly and prophetical offices of Christ are administered in prayer and preaching, so is his kingly office in government. Indeed, if we thought, as you do, that Christ had left his kingdom, the church, without laws and officers for the government of it, or that this government were an indifferent thing, alterable at the wills and pleasures of men, then we should be as indifferent, where, or how, or by whom it was administered, as you and Mr. B. are.

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Third. The officers are to feed the flock, one part whereof consists in government. Acts xx. 28. Now if admonitions and excommunications may be administered apart from the body, how is the flock fed by them? or how do those elders, upon whom the government of the church especially lieth, discharge their public ministry, and service unto the Lord, and his church, to which they are called? or how can the church see, and know their ministration, that they may have them in superabundant love for their works' sake, if there be cause, or contrariwise, if reason require the contrary? 1 Thess. v. 13; or when they that sin, are rebuked openly, whether elders or people, how can the rest fear? 1 Tim. v. 20. Yea, how can these men which are to feed the flock by government, be accounted faithful shepherds, either before God, or men, if they gather not the flock together, and see they feed accordingly? though with you, Mr. B., they that feed the flocks by government, never so much as see the faces of the hundred part of their sheep, and when they have a sheep in hand for straying, it may be from a dumb shepherd to a preacher, they deal with him for the most part many a mile from, but never in, the place where the particular flock walks, whereof that sheep is.

Lastly, The administration of Christ's kingdom, being a part of the communion of saints, and public worship, is to be performed on the Lord's day, as well as other parts are; and to be joined with the administration of the word, sacraments, alms, and the rest, as making all one entire body of communion: yea in cases, to go before the rest, I am persuaded, lest the holy things be polluted by notorious obstinate offenders. And if the collection for the saints which concerns the body, be a Lord's, or first day's work, 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2, how much more the spiritual ordinances which respect the soul, either for humiliation or comfort! Yea, I see not how the church can compel any to forbear their bodily labour in the six days, wherein God hath given them liberty to work, except it be upon occasions extraordinary, and as they may be constrained to meet for any other part of public worship.

Well then, it must needs be, that this church of officers must receive, and examine complaints, reprove and censure

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offenders publicly, and with the knowledge of the whole body, met together in public assembly, and this liberty in the execution of excommunication, you grant the multitude, page 92 of your book. And surely there must be but one church for the whole business. But this course is more unreasonable than the other, namely, that the brethren must be gathered together to be spectators, whilst the officers alone sit upon the thrones of David, to hear and judge, excluding the brethren from all communion with them, though they be personally present. For the communion of the church stands not in this, that men are present, and see and hear what is done, and receive profit, for so may they do which are without, but in the mutual relation, and concurrence of the parts, and is in this ordinance only amongst them, which are reproved, or do reprove, at least by consent, if they see cause, which are censured, or do censure. And besides it is against common sense, that the officers should be the church representative, when the body of the church, which they represent, is present, as hath been formerly showed: and to call the officers alone the church, or assembly, which are both one when the people are assembled with them as necessary parts, is to call one part of the church, the church, excluding another part of it.

8. If the officers alone be the church to be told, and to admonish and judge the offender, for there is one, and the same church for all these, then it must follow, that if the officers admonish, the church also admonisheth, and on the contrary, that if the officers refuse, the church also refuseth to admonish an offender: but neither the one nor the other of these is true. First, the elders observing sin, may and ought to admonish the party sinning, whether the church observe it or no, yea, though the whole church be otherwise minded, yea, any one of the elders may admonish if he see cause, both the rest of the officers, and the brethren also: but this admonition cannot be the admonition of the church, except we will say the church may admonish where she sees no sin, yea, against her will, yea, which is most senseless, except she may be said to admonish herself.

The second point needs no great refutation. For who

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will say, that if the officers refuse to admonish, and make themselves accessory unto sin by bolstering it up, that then the church is also failing, and the whole lump thereby leavened, except the rest consent with them, or fail in their personal duties: which notwithstanding might be said of them, and imputed unto them, if by the church were meant the officers.

9. If a brother, privately considered, may bind sin privately, upon the party's irrepentance, then may the same brother, as a part of the public assembly, bind for his part publicly: and so he brings the party impenitent privately bound to the church, holding him still bound upon the continuance of his obstinacy, but publicly now, with the whole communion, as privately before by himself with his witness. The consequence of this argument, Mr. B. grants in his latter book, p. 200, upon Mr. Smyth's urging, Matt. xviii. compared with some other scriptures much-what to this purpose; but the antecedent, as he speaks, he denies, or rather distinguisheth of these words binding and loosing, which he understands only to be meant of personal wrongs against a man, but not of sins at all against God.

But as this exposition contains in it two notable absurdities, the first, that other men may forgive injuries or wrongs done unto me, and secondly, that a communion of faithful men, for so the words are, which is the church, may meddle with judging civil matters, as are injuries, otherwise than as they are sins against God, at which they take offence, or scandalize: so is it evidently convinced by the text, when Christ speaks of binding and loosing in heaven, Matt. xviii. 18, whether injuries come not, save as they are sins against God. Yea, Mr. B. himself grants in another place of this book, viz. page 223, towards the end, that our Saviour in this place, speaks of binding and loosing spiritually, and that not by the power of Christ given to ministers, but to common Christians: where he also brings sundry reasons to prove, that the binding and loosing there spoken of, doth no way concern the ministers, or public officers, but private persons; notoriously crossing both his first book in the persons, which he will there needs have officers, and no private men, and here private

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persons, and no officers; and his second, in the thing, which in the former place he will have merely of civil consideration, but here grants to be meant religiously.

10. The next reason I take from ver. 19, where mention is made by Christ of prayer, by which the censures there spoken of are to be sanctified both before and after they be executed. Whereupon I demand, whether the brethren present with the officers, be part of the church, to which the offender is brought, and by which he is judged, in the communion of prayer, or no? It will not be denied; thence it must follow, that they are also part of the church in receiving and judging of the complaint, or else that they pass in, and out, and in again, in respect of the communion, during one and the same exercise, and the sanctification of it.

11. They which are gathered in, or into the name of Christ, they are the church spoken of, Matt. xviii. and have the power of Christ for binding and loosing, as is evident, ver. xx. Now as methinks it should be strange to affirm, that the brethren present with the officers, are gathered in or into any other name than the name of Christ, so doth Paul, drawing this rule into practice, 1 Cor. v., command, that the multitude, with the officers by not only Mr. B., but the Jesuit's confession,* be gathered together in or into the name of Christ, and that they so gathered, do by the power of Christ deliver to Satan the offender for his humbling, ver. 4, 5.

12. Lastly, If the officers, without the brethren, be the church for the censures, then are they the church for the other public ordinances of prayer, preaching, sacraments, and the like, and may minister them out of the communion of the body; neither can there be any reason given why they should be the church for one solemn ordinance and not for another, for one part of the public communion of the church, and not for another. And, therefore, in the representative church of the Jews at Jerusalem were not only the hard causes opened, about which the people came to inquire, but there were also the sacrifices offered, and other the solemn services performed, according to the dispensations of the times. And to make the officers the church for one part of the power of Christ, and not for another, for

* Maldonatus, vide p. 219; Supra, note.

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one solemn administration, and not for another, especially having fit instruments to execute, is a broken course, and indeed to divide Christ from himself.

But about this something will be said, though nothing against it, and namely this. That the officers are to do in one of these ordinances, as in another, and the multitude no more in the one, than in the other: and that as the officers only are to pray, preach, and administer the sacraments, and the people not to meddle with these things, so in the matter of excommunication.

On Administration of Ordinances by the Church.

To this I reply sundry things.

First, If the officers alone be the church in the censures, then it is not in this part of communion, as in other parts: for not the officers alone, but the brethren with them, are the church, in prayer, preaching, administering the sacraments and the like. And as the church, being the body of Christ, is the most entire, and best compact of all bodies, so is the communion in it most entire and full amongst all the parts, so far as natural impossibility hindereth not. And therefore even children, though by nature incapable of other parts of communion, wherein it is required they should be agents, or do anything yet do communicate in that one ordinance of baptism, in the administration whereof, as of circumcision before times, they are merely patients, and baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. But in other actions, and amongst other members, with whom natural inability dispenseth not, there is a full, perfect, and entire communion, and that as sensible, and bodily amongst all, as may be, without confusion. In preaching, prayer, the Lord's Supper, psalms, elections, and alms, all communicate, though with some difference of order and manner of the thing. In the first which is preaching, all communicate, one officer teacheth, and the rest, both officers and people are taught: in prayer, one officer utters the voice, and the rest of the church say, amen, and so all communicate: in the Lord's Supper all communicate, one by giving, or administering, and all the rest by receiving with him: in singing of psalms all communicate, yea and that vocally, and together where they can all combine and concur without disorder; in elections

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all choose, or are chosen: in the distribution of the alms, all either give or receive, and so communicate together. But now in public admonitions, and excommunications, there must be a schism, for the body of the church is by Mr. B. excluded from the communion, yea, though locally present, for all the communion passeth betwixt the parties admonishing and admonished, excommunicating and excommunicated, whereof the body of the church is neither, but a very cipher, and a hang-by.

Secondly, There is great difference betwixt prayer, and preaching, on the one side, and excommunication on the other side, in respect of the ordering and manner of dispensing those ordinances. One officer prepareth in secret and several from the rest, for preaching and prayer, and so administereth these ordinances lawfully, as the ordinances of the church without the consent, yea or foreknowledge of any one either brother, or officer; but it is otherwise in admonition, and excommunication. The sin must be told to the church, and they upon knowledge of it, must admonish the sinner, and so the excommunication is publicly to be prepared, with the foreknowledge and foreconsent of the body, which otherwise the officers, much less one officer, without the knowledge or consent of either other officer or people, may not minister. One officer, I confess, may admonish an offender, without the consent of the church, yea, or of any other officer, be there never so many, yea he may admonish both the officers and church: but this can in no sense be called the admonition of the church, except we will say, one officer is the church, excluding both the people and other officers, and that the church may admonish herself, and that against her will, which were unreasonable and senseless affirmations.

On Prophesying or Preaching.

Thirdly, For a kind of preaching, namely, that we call prophesying, Rom. xii. 6, and so of prayer for the sanctifying of it, that I affirm not to be so appropriated to the ministry, but that others having received a gift thereunto, may and ought to stir up the same, and to use it in the church, for edification, exhortation, and comfort, 1 Cor. xiv. 3, though not yet called into the office of ministry, as hath

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been in part already, and now is more fully proved by these scriptures. Numb. xi. 29; 2 Chron. xvii. 7; Jer. I. 4, 5; Matt. x. 1—5; Luke viii. 39; x. 1—3, 9; John iv. 28, 29, 39; Acts viii. 1—4, with 11, 19—21; 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11; Rev. xi. 3; xiv. 6.

And more specially, the apostle, 1 Cor. xiv., doth of purpose, and at large handle this business, not only giving liberty unto, but laying charge upon all such, though not in office, as have received a spiritual gift, to exercise the same, in the ordinance of prophesying. Now for the better understanding of this point, it must be considered, that the church of Corinth did abound with spiritual gifts, above all other churches, both ordinary and extraordinary: which gifts of the Spirit they did abuse too much unto faction, and ambition. Whereupon the apostle takes occasion in the beginning of the twelfth chapter, and so forward, to direct them in the right use of these gifts of God, which was the employment of them to the edifying of the body in love: and therefore having, chap. xiii. laid down a full description, and large commendation of that grace of love, in the fourteenth chapter and the beginning of it, he exhorts to prophesying, and to the study, and use of that gift, which though it were not so strange a thing, as was the sudden gift of tongues, nor which drew with it such wonder and admiration, yet was it more profitable for the church, and though a matter of less note, yet of greater charity, which must bear sway in all our actions.

Against this scripture, though in itself most pregnant for the purpose in hand, two exceptions are taken. The one that the apostle speaks of such persons only, as are in office, and so of their ordinary ministerial teaching: the other, that he speaks of such gifts, as were extraordinary, and so being ceased, that the ordinance as temporary, is ceased with them. But neither of these rubs, must turn us out of the way of truth, nor cause us to forbear this most excellent and comfortable ordinance of the Lord Jesus, wherein is to be seen and heard the variety and harmony of the graces of God, for the edifying of the church, ver. 4, and gaining of the unbelievers, ver. 24, 25.

That the apostle in this chapter directs the church in the use of extraordinary gifts is most evident, neither will

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I deny, but that the officers are to guide and order this action of prophesying, as all other public businesses, yea even these wherein the brethren have greatest liberty, but that he also intends the establishing of, and so takes order, and gives direction for an ordinary constant exercise in the church, even by men out of office, I do manifest by these reasons.

1st. Because the apostle speaks of the manifestation of a gift, or grace, common to all persons, as well brethren as ministers, ordinary as extraordinary, and that at all times, which is love: as also of such fruits and effects of that grace, as are no less common to all, than the grace itself, nor of less continuance in the churches of Christ, to wit of edification, exhortation, and comfort, ver. 3 compared with 1 Thess. v. 11—14.

2nd. Verse 21, he permits all to prophesy and speaks as largely of prophesying, as of learning, and receiving comfort.

But now lest any should object, "may women also prophesy?" the apostle prevents that objection, and it may be, reproves that disorder amongst the Corinthians, ver. 34, by a flat inhibition, enjoining them expressly to keep silence in the church, in the presence of men to whom they ought to be subject, and to learn at home of their husbands, ver. 35, and not by teaching the men to usurp authority over them, 1 Tim. ii. 11, 12, which the men in prophesying do lawfully use.

3rd. Now this restraint of women from prophesying, or other speaking with authority in the church, both in this place to the Corinthians, and in the other to Timothy, doth clear the two former objections. In that Paul forbids women, he gives liberty to all men gifted accordingly, opposing women to men, sex to sex, and not women to officers, which were frivolous. And again in restraining women, he shows his meaning to be of ordinary not extraordinary prophesying, for women immediately, and extraordinarily, and miraculously inspired, might speak without restraint. Exod. xv. 20; Judges iv. 4; Luke ii. 36; Acts xxi. 9.

4th. The prophets here spoken of, were not extraordinary, because their doctrines were to be judged by other prophets, and their spirits to be subject unto the spirits of

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others, ver. 29, 32, where the doctrines of the extraordinary prophets, were neither subject to, nor to be judged by any, but they, as the apostles, being immediately, and infallibly inspired, were the foundation upon which the church is built, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. Eph. ii. 20; iii. 5.

5th. The apostle, ver. 37, makes a prophet, and a man spiritual all one, whom he further describes, not by any extraordinary gift, but by that common Christian grace of submission unto the things he writes, as the commandments of the Lord. Unto whom also ver. 38, he opposeth a man wilfully ignorant: teaching us, that he doth not measure a prophet in this place, either by the office of ministry, or by any extraordinary prophetical gift, but by the common christian gift of spiritual discerning.

6th. It is the commandment of the Lord by the apostle, that a bishop must be apt to teach, and that such elders or bishops be called, as are able to exhort with sound doctrine, and to convince the gainsayers. 1 Tim. iii. 2. Now except men before they be in office, may be permitted to manifest their gifts in doctrine, and prayer, Tit. i. 9; Acts vi. 4; which are the two main works requiring special qualification, in the teaching elders, how shall the church, which is to choose them, take knowledge of their sufficiency, that with faith and good conscience, they may call them, and submit unto them, for their guides? If it be said, that upon such occasion, trial may be taken of men's gifts, I do answer 1st, that men's gifts and abilities should be known in some measure, before they be once thought on, for officers: and 2nd, that there is none other use, or trial of those gifts, but in prophesying: for everything in the Lord's house is to be performed in some ordinance, there is nothing thrown about the house, or out of order in it: and other ordinance in the church, save this of prophesying, is there none, wherein men out of office are to pray, and teach, which therefore, they ought to covet, ver. 39, and in it to be exercised, and trained up, that when officers want, the church may not need to set up men, as it were to play their prizes, not send them like school-boys to be posed, as your fashion in England is. And that minister, that is not called upon the church's experimental knowledge of his

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sufficiency in these things, comes not in by the door, which Christ hath opened, nor may be accounted a true minister of Christ, and his church.

7th. Either men not yet in office, being accordingly qualified, may preach the truth of Christ, or it is not possible, that the people should be taught in lawful manner, either in nations universally heathenish, or universally apostate under antichrist, before there be true churches gathered, by which the officers are to be chosen: for as it is not very like that heathenish or antichristian priests will sincerely teach the truth, neither is it lawful for them to administer, or for any to join with them in their administrations, by virtue of any heathenish, or antichristian calling, or ordination, Rev. xiv. 8—11; 1 Tim. v. 22. And howsoever the Church of England hath preferred a dumb mass, and profane priesthood with a service-book before this ordinance, yet the truth of Christ is otherwise, and so the church of Christ is taught to practise: which you also, Mr. B., might do well in modesty to acknowledge, though you want liberty to use it.

8th. I have insisted the longer upon this point, both for itself, and because it serveth effectually to prove the other point in hand. For if the brethren have liberty in this ordinance of prophecy, they have also liberty in the other ordinance of excommunication: for they are both of the same nature. Look to whom Christ gave the one key of doctrine, to them he gave the other key of discipline: and they that may handle the one, may have a finger upon the other: they that may bind and loose by doctrine, reproof, and comfort, they may also bind or loose by application of the same doctrine, reproof, or comfort to the person obstinate in sin, or penitent for it. As the one of those doth necessarily establish the other, so take away either, and the other cannot stand. And here I gather another argument against your exposition of Matthew xviii.

Lastly, As the elders principally to be employed in teaching, cannot warrantably be chosen without good experience of their gift, and faculty, in prophecy, and prayer, so neither can they, which are chiefly to be employed in government, with good conscience of the church, be called to that ministration, except they also have given,

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and the church taken good proof of their ability, and simplicity in the discussing and debating, carrying and contriving of church affairs, as also in admonition, exhortation, and comfort publicly occasioned, and so manifested. And a very presumptuous sin it is in any church, to choose an officer, not thus trained up, and tried. Whereupon I conclude, that brethren, though not in office, have not their hands tied from meddling in the affairs of the church, especially the censures, but are bound in their places to see to, and assist in the reformation of public scandals, and therefore are part of the church, to which an offender is to be complained of: for only they are bound to see reformation of the evil, to whom the complaint is to be made, where Christ saith, "Tell the Church."

On 1 *Corinthians, Chapter* v.

It now remains we come to the other scripture, which Mr. B. turns so lightly over, viz. 1 Cor. v. which that we may aright understand for the present purpose two things must be considered: the one whereof is, what the apostle's scope is, and what he intends in that chapter, and the other what persons he interesteth in the business, about which he deals.

The prelates, with their obedient clergy, do constantly affirm, that the apostle there reproves the Corinthians for not complaining to him of the incestuous person, that he might have censured him, and that he commands them, being now judged by him, as having the sole authority in his hands, to execute his sentence upon him; and this exposition Mr. B. laboureth to confirm, pp. 92, 94, 98.

We, on the contrary, affirm, that the apostle in that scripture reproveth the church of Corinth, or them to whom he writes, for suffering, as they did, that wicked man uncast out, and that now he wills them to discharge that duty, wherein they had formerly failed in excommunicating him: to which he also gives his consent, going before them, as his duty was, in judging, and withal avouching his presence in spirit, that is in will and consent, since he could not be bodily present with them. And that this is the apostle's meaning, it is much that any man reading the

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chapter with an honest heart, should deny. The arguments of proof, are manifest in the particulars.

1. They ought with sorrow to have put him out, ver. 2, 13.

2. They were gathered together in the name of the Lord Jesus, and were by the power of the Lord Jesus, to deliver the offender to Satan for his humbling, that is, to cast him out of the church into the world, where Satan reigns, ver. 4, 5.

3. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump," ver. 6, whereupon the apostle, alluding to the ancient custom of putting leaven out of the houses, when the passover was eaten, Exod. xii. 15, bids the church purge out the old leaven, that is the incestuous man, that they might be a new lump, ver. 7, showing therein, that they were soured, and become an old lump, in not purging him out, else what need they do anything to become new.

But here sundry things are objected by Mr. Bernard. 2nd book, page 229. As first, that a man may be where leaven is, and yet not be leavened, if he take not leaven. If by taking leaven he mean, inclining or falling into the same sin, it is idle to imagine, that the whole church was in any such danger of incest. Where 2nd, he adds, that a man reproving the offender, complaining of him, and seeking, as he may in his place, reformation as Chloe did, is not leavened, he colours with a few good words many foul errors. 1st, that Chloe complained of the incestuous man, which was not so: she complained of the contentions amongst the Corinthians, but that of the incestuous person was rather brought to Paul by common fame, than otherwise. 1 Cor. i. 11; v. 1. 2nd. That it is sufficient for the people, yea, or the ministers either to reprove an offender, and so to complain to the bishop's court of him. 3rd. That a man is discharged if he seek reformation as he may in his place, whereas it is first required a man have such a place, or be in such a church, as is capable of God's ordinances, and wherein he may use the means for reformation, which Christ hath left: otherwise his very place, and standing is not of God, nor may be by him continued. Lastly, where he saith, that the incestuous man had not leavened the Corinthians because Paul saith, ye are unleavened, ver. 7, it is an ill collection. For they were

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unleavened or sweet bread in their persons, that is sanctified by the Spirit, but soured or leavened in the lump of communion, by suffering that wicked man uncensured: and the apostle's desire is, that that wicked man might be cast out of the society, that as they were severally pure, or in their persons, so the whole church together, or mass might be pure, which before was polluted with his contagion.

4. The Corinthians had formerly been taught by Paul not to acompany or be commingled with fornicators, covetous persons, &c.: that is, according to the drift of the whole chapter, to cast them out, and so have neither spiritual nor civil familiarity with them, ver. 9, and here he reproves them for failing in that duty.

5. They to whom Paul wrote were to judge them that were within, and are charged to use that power in putting away from among themselves that wicked man. ver. 12, 13.

And thus the evidence for the first point is clear, that they to whom Paul wrote and which were to be gathered together, were to be gathered into the name of Christ, by his power to bind or deliver to Satan the offender, as Matt. xviii. 18—20, were to purge out the old leaven, not to be commingled with the ungodly, to judge them that were within, and to put away, and from among themselves, the obstinately wicked. And it is most untruly and unconscionably affirmed by this man, page 92, as I have formerly observed, that all that can be gathered from this place, is that the censures are to be executed with the public knowledge of them that are gathered together.

Now the second consideration is, who those persons are thus to be gathered together, upon whose shoulders the apostle lays this duty of delivering to Satan, purging out, putting away, and judging this wicked man.

And for this, I need no more than Mr. B.'s own confession in the place before named, page 92, where he expressly affirmeth, that by them that there meet together, is meant the body of the church. And though he, and all the world should deny it, yet would the truth of God stand: which I thus manifest.

1. They among whom the fornicator was, out of the

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midst of whom he was to be put, and which were puffed up, when they had rather cause of sorrowing, to them the apostle writes, them he reproves, they were to be gathered together for the excommunicating, purging out, and judging the offender, ver. 1—5. And therefore the duty here enjoined, as well concerns the brethren as the officers, except we will say, the fornicator was only among, and in the midst of the officers, and to put out from amongst them, and left amongst the people still, and that the officers only were puffed up, when they should have sorrowed, and not the brethren with them.

2. It concerned the people as well as the priests in the type, and shadow, to put away leaven out of their houses, and to keep the passover with unleavened bread: Exod. xii. 8, 15: and so in the truth, and substance, to purge and put out this leaven Paul speaks of, namely the incestuous person, ver. 7, 8.

3. The apostle admonisheth them, that they were not to be commingled with fornicators, nor to eat with them: ver. 9—11: and this duty, I hope, as well concerned the brethren, as the officers.

4. They with whom Paul deals are commanded to put the wicked man from among themselves, ver. 13, so that the same persons, from among whom he is to be put, are to put him away, which are both officers and people.

And so I conclude, that the rule prescribed by Christ, Matt. xviii., and the practice of the same rule commended by Paul, 1 Cor. v. do severally and jointly couple and combine together the elders and people in the censuring of an offender, the officers going before, the brethren following in their order, and the women lastly by silent consent, wherein the Scriptures distinguish them from the men. 1 Cor. xiv. 34; 1 Tim. ii. 12.

To these things I will add in the last place the consideration of a scripture, to wit, 2 Cor. ii. 6, of which Mr. B. and many others with him, think of force sufficient to dash in pieces all that hath been, or can be spoken for the brethren's liberty, and right in the forehandled business. But as I have formerly answered the objections, forced from this scripture against the truth I hold, so will I here

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set down one argument or two, very pregnant, (except I be deceived) for the confirmation of it, from the same scripture, and the context thereof.

1. They whom the apostle by his letter made sorry, for their failing in the casting out of the incestuous man, and that with a sorrow to repentance, manifesting itself, with great indignation and zeal, they were to reprove, and censure him, and so did, to his reformation, and their own clearing: which that it was not the case of the officers alone, but of the brethren with them, appears in these scriptures. 1 Cor. v. 1, 2, with 2 Cor. ii. 5, 6, and vii. 8—12.

2. Paul writes not only to the officers, but to the brethren as well as to them, to forgive or loose, to comfort and confirm their love toward the same person upon his repentance, 2 Cor. ii. 7, 8, therein plainly witnessing, that the brethren as well as the officers, had bound, rebuked, and manifested their indignation against the sin, and the person for it.

Now this point in hand I will conclude with the observation of a practice yet continued, and in use in the Church of England, which is, that persons excommunicated for notorious sins, before they be absolved, are to do their penance, as they call it, in the parish churches, whereof they are, and there to ask the whole church forgiveness. Now I would know of you Mr. B. whether the church have power to forgive the parties' sin, as men can forgive sin, yea, or no? If you say no, you discover the shame of your church, thus profanely to take in vain the name of God, and to make a mock of Christ's ordinances; if you answer affirmatively, then you grant the power of Christ to forgive, and to loose sins, and so consequently to retain, and bind them, to be in the body of the church, for which I contend. The truth is, there is no such power in the parish assemblies as now they stand; they can neither bind the sinner, nor retain his sin, be he to them never so impenitent; or loose him, and his sin, seem his repentance unto them never so full, and unfeigned: these knots are to be tied and loosed, only by the chancellor's or official's fingers, this power have they inclosed with hedge and ditch, and as things are judged at their tribunal, so must the captived church take them, and will it, nill it, receive or refuse the

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party accordingly. The prelates, and their substitutes have seized the substance, and kernel, as it were in their hands, leaving the poor people only the shell and shadow to feed upon. And yet this very formal shadow still remaining in the apostate assemblies, is sufficient to bewray how substantial a power the churches of Christ were possessed of, in their constitution. This shell that remains shows where the kernel hath been. And as in this, so is it in sundry other points. When the bishop ordains a minister, he bids him go preach the gospel, though he have been his porter, and be known unable to read sensibly: he useth also these words, "Take thou authority in this congregation," though it may be he is an hundred miles off, but never in the place wherein he is to minister: he gives him charge also to minister the discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, though he be but the bishop's man's man to execute his judgments: which forms of speech, notwithstanding, serve to show, what the ministers ought to do, and where, and by whose election they ought to be appointed, though in truth they do, or be nothing less. And thus, God, by his providence, continueth unworn out in the degenerate assemblies, such steps, and stadles,* as may serve to shame them, by showing unto all that will see how and where things have stood by Christ's appointment in his church, which do also very well consort with the disposition of Antichrist, whose property is under a formal flourish for Christ to fight against him in his truth, and ordinances.

Seventh Error.

Our seventh reckoned error is,—

"That the sin of one man publicly and obstinately stood in, being not reformed, nor the offender cast out, doth so pollute the whole congregation, that none may communicate with the same, in any of the holy things of God, though it be a church rightly constituted, till the party be excommunicated."

This position thus set down I deny with Mr. Ainsworth, though with him, and Mr. Smyth, I do undertake the confirmation of that truth, which in his refutation, Mr. B.

* Marks or impressions.

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goes about to impugn. And that is, that the whole communion in the Church of England, is so polluted, with profane and scandalous persons, as that even in this respect alone, were there none other, there were just cause of separation from it.

On Connivance at Sin.

And to this purpose I will lay down a ground, upon which I do build whatsoever I speak in this point, which I entreat the reader here, and always to observe, and that is:—

He that fails in those duties for the reformation of the sin of another, which the Lord requires at his hand, he is accessory to that other man's sin, and makes it his own by connivancy. And this not only the Scriptures, but even common sense and the light of nature do confirm. And upon this ground I deny your enumeration of parts, in the case of pollution, to be sufficient. This strain comes more ways than you are aware of. A man may be polluted by and guilty of the sin of another, though he neither in judgment allow of it, nor in affection like it, nor practise the like, but the contrary, yea, though he speak against it, discountenance it, and browbeat it, as you speak, when you teach your people to look big upon sin, where they dare not meddle with the reproving it: and do his best in his place to reclaim the sinner, which are the preservatives you give against pollution, and that these ways:—

First, When a man doth not consider or observe his brother as he ought, nor watch over him in the holy communion of saints wherein he is set, and which the Lord hath established for this end, that he might be honoured in the communion and fellowship of saints. 1 Thes. v. 14; Heb. iii. 12, 13; x. 24, 25. And it is a saying, only becoming Cain, and those that are with him of that wicked one, 1 John iii. 12, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Gen. iv. 9. Thus then a man may be guilty of the sin of another, yea, though he be utterly ignorant of it. And thus, it is like, was "all Israel guilty of Achan's trespass in the excommunicate thing:" who therefore are charged by the Lord to have committed a sin, and to have trespassed and transgressed, and were punished by the Lord for the same, and deprived

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of his presence till the excommunicate or execrable thing were destroyed from among them. Josh. vii. 1; iv. 5, 10—12, 25, 26; xxii. 20.

A second case of pollution is the neglect of admonition for the reformation of the offender, according to the order and degrees by Christ himself set down, secret, and betwixt the offended and offender, if the sin be of secret practice and nature: privately, and with a witness or two, in the second place: publicly in the last place by complaint made unto the church having the power of Christ for excommunication. Lev. xix. 17; Matt. xviii. 15—17.

There is yet a third duty, and that is separation, whereof you also, Mr. B. in sundry cases do admit, page 105, and to which the Lord in the Scriptures calls his people for the shaming of obstinate rebellious offenders, Rom. xvi. 17; 2 Cor. vi. 14—17; 1 Tim. vi. 5, the neglect whereof casts both the guilt of the sin and condemnation of the sinner, upon him that neglects it. So that a man is not only bound in his place to do his best for the reclaiming of his brother, but to see his place be such as wherein he may orderly discharge the duties of admonition, otherwise both his practice and place are unlawful. And you yourself will teach your people this truth in the general, that the place or calling absolutely tying a man to the breach of any of God's commandments, is unlawful, and to be forsaken.

Now this is your very case, and the case of the best in your church: the Lord open your eyes that you may see it, and give you hearts to make a right use of it. As there are in your parish whom you dare not admonish secretly, much less with a witness or two, so, which is the last and chiefest remedy, you cannot make complaint to the church: your church is not furnished with Christ's power to take vengeance upon disobedience: you are utterly unfurnished of the weapons of this warfare. Great was the slavery of the Israelites under the Philistines, when "there was not a sword found amongst them, in the day of battle:" 1 Sam. xiii. 22, far greater, and more to be bewailed, is your spiritual slavery under the Philistine and Egyptian lords, the prelates, which have spoiled you of all, and left you unarmed, for the Lord's battle. You know well, Mr. B., that

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the official is not the church, and so do thousands in England with you. For all whom, how much better were it, and more agreeable to true godliness, to renounce such unsanctified places, and standings, wherein they do unavoidably day by day, stain themselves with so many impieties of their brethren, as though their own personal sins were too few, by failing in this most necessary duty, laid by the Lord himself upon every brother for the reformation of his brother, than to plead, they do the best they can in their places, to reclaim them! It will not be sufficient for men, suffering themselves to be tied short in the chains of antichristian bondage from the performance of this necessary duty, at the day of the Lord, when men shall appear to have perished through their fault, which might have been gained by their admonition, Matt. xviii. 15, to say they have done what they could within the reach of their chain. But let all them that fear the Lord, and his righteous judgments, and which have hearts tenderly affected with the conscience of the duty they owe unto their brethren, and to whom the liberty purchased with the blood of Christ seemeth precious, break asunder those chains of unrighteousness, those bonds of Antichrist, and come out of Babylon, and plant their feet in those pleasant paths of the Lord, wherein they may make straight steps unto him, walking in that light, and liberty, which Christ hath so dearly purchased for them.

On Separation from a Church.

But for separation from a church rightly constituted, or from a true church, so remaining, I do utterly disclaim it. For there is but one body, the church, and but one Lord, or head of that body, Christ, Eph. iv. 4, 5: and whosoever separates from the body, the church, separates from the head, Christ, in that respect.

But this I hold, that if iniquity be committed in the church, and complaint, and proof accordingly made, and that the church will not reform, or reject the party offending, but will on the contrary maintain presumptuously, and abet such impiety, that then by abetting that party and his sin, she makes it her own by imputation, and enwraps herself in the same guilt with the sinner. And remaining

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irreformable, either by such members of the same church, as are faithful, if there be any, or by other sister churches, wipeth herself out the Lord's church-roll, and now ceaseth to be any longer the true church of Christ. And whatsoever truths, or ordinances of Christ, this rebellious rout still retains, it but usurps the same without right unto them, or promise of blessing upon them; both the persons and sacrifices are abominable unto the Lord. Tit. i. 16; Prov. xxi. 27.

On the Evils permitted in the Jewish Church.

Now if any object the church of the Jews, and the obstinacy thereof in sin, and wickedness, which was a true church notwithstanding: it must be considered, that no church in the world now, hath that absolute promise of the Lord's visible presence, which that church then had, till the coming of Christ. Gen. xvii. 7; Exod. xxix. 43—45.

It was simply necessary the Messiah should be born in the true church, wherein he might have communion, and fulfil the law. Matt. v. 17; Luke ii. 21—23, 29.

The Lord did ever afford the Jews, even in their deepest apostacy, some or other visible signs of his presence, and those even extraordinary, when ordinary failed: thereby declaring himself still to remember his promise made to their forefathers, and ever and anon by some godly king, prophet, or priest, or, if these would not serve, by some severe correction, destroying from amongst them the chiefest rebels, brought them to repentance, and caused them to pass anew into his covenant, as hath formerly been declared.

But with us it is otherwise. No church now can expect or doth enjoy such extraordinary privileges. But if it depart from the Lord by any transgression, and therein remain irrepentant, after due conviction, and will not be reclaimed, it manifests unto us, that God also hath left it, and that, as the church by her sin hath separated from, and broken covenant with God, so God by leaving her in hardness of heart without repentance, hath on his part broken and dissolved the covenant also.

The Lord Jesus threatens the churches, for leaving their first love, and for their lukewarmness, that he will come

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against them speedily, and remove their candlestick, that is dischurch them, except they repent; and spue them as loathsome out of his mouth. Rev. ii. 4, 5; iii. 16.

There is the same reason, in due proportion, of one member sinning, of a few, of many, and of a whole church; now if a brother sin, and will not be reclaimed by the ordinary means appointed by Christ for that purpose, he is to be accounted no longer a brother, but an heathen, and publican, Matt. xviii. 17, so is it with two or three brethren, with a few, with many, or with the whole church, though there be a different order of dealing: for the multitude of sinners doth no way lessen or extenuate the sin either in the eyes of God or men.

Now for your arguments. In handling whereof I will also take in such of your score of reasons* against pollution, as are worthy consideration.

First you say, "Under the law there was a sacrifice for all manner of pollutions, but none for this, and therefore it is no sin."

It is not so, for 1. If a man polluted his hands with innocent blood by murder, or his body with adultery, or wrought any other wickedness punishable by death, there was, that I find, no particular sacrifice for it. 2. The people of Israel were guilty of the pollution of the Lord's house, by bringing, or suffering to come, into his sanctuary, strangers either uncircumcised in flesh, or in heart: Ezek. xliv. 6, 7, 9: and so there was an offering to be made once a year for the purging of the holy place, and tabernacle, for the cleansing of the altar, and to be an atonement for the priests and for all the people of the congregation. Lev. xvi. 15, 16, 20; xx. 33, 34. 3. The pollution, I speak of, coming only by neglect of some duty for the reformation of a brother, cannot be denied to be sin, and with other pollution meddle I not.

"The godly people were never reproved for being at the ministration of holy things though wicked men were there."

We grant it in the true church, but deny a company of impenitent sinners to remain the true church, being to the judgment of men, unrecoverable. Yea, if but one have

* Plain Evidences, pp. 171—173.

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committed the evil notoriously scandalous, and the rest so tolerate him, that little leaven leavens the whole lump, 1 Cor. v. 6, and with leaven must not the passover be eaten in any case. Exod. xii. 15. And here Mr. Bernard your cavilling reply upon Mr. Ainsworth, page 210, speaking of the whole church, and all the assembly, is answered. The Corinthians might as well have eluded, and put off Paul's argument, and reproof, as you Mr. Ainsworth's: for Paul speaks of the whole lump, as Mr. Ainsworth doth of the whole church. And surely if two or three officers be the whole church that hath the power of Christ to judge and censure offenders as you say, the whole lump might soon be leavened, and the whole church plead for open iniquity.

"The prophets did not separate themselves though they cried out against wickedness. Isa. i. 4—6, 9, 10, &c."

Both the prophets, priests, and people that were godly did separate from apostate Israel in Jeroboam's time, 1 Kings xi. 29—33; 2 Chron. xi. 14, 16, which we take to be your estate in a great measure, considering your worship, holy days, priesthood, and government. But for Jerusalem and the church there, the case is otherwise. Touching which, I desire these two rules may be borne in mind.

First, That there was that one only visible church upon the face of the earth, tied to one temple, altar, sacrifice, priesthood, in one place, and that no man could absolutely separate from that church, but he must separate from the visible presence, and from all the solemn public worship of God.

Secondly, That the Jewish Church had not that distinct ecclesiastical ordinance of excommunication, which we now have, but that the obstinate or presumptuous offender was by bodily death to be cut off from the Lord's people, the same persons, namely, the whole nation being both church and commonwealth, according to that special dispensation of those times. Whereupon it followeth, first, that since absolute separation from the Jewish Church was unlawful, communion with it was lawful: and second, that since the church had not the power to cast out an offender, it was no pollution unto them to suffer him amongst them, so they discharged such other duties as were enjoined them,

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by the Lord. But it is now otherwise; the times are altered and the dispensations of them. Every place where a company of faithful people are gathered into Christ's name, is Mount Sion, and hath the promise of God's presence: and separation from one church remaining uncurable may be made into another. And as separation may be from a church, so may excommunication be of person, obstinately wicked. And these two rules, rightly applied, will, as I am persuaded, satisfy the scriptures and reasons brought by Mr. B. here and both by him, and others elsewhere, from the Old Testament, and the unpolluted communion of the servants of God in the Jewish Church. The other scriptures I will briefly pass over.

Tit. i. 15, shows, that all the creatures of God are pure to the pure. I grant it, and his ordinances also. But ever provided, in their lawful and right use, which in a profane and unsanctified communion they are not. By your exposition, Mr. Bernard, a godly man might eat the Lord's Supper with heretics, excommunicates, yea Turks or Pagans, if they would, and yet all should be pure to him. Of the second and third chapter in the Revelation, I have spoken formerly, and there proved that the churches were polluted by the toleration of wicked persons amongst them, and therefore reproved; neither is it material, if the Scriptures do not expressly tax the whole church for connivancy every time they rebuked some persons in it. It is sufficient they do it in some places, and in some churches: there is the same reason of all, neither hath one church privilege above another, or for one sin, more than another. And this also may serve for an answer to the second and third of your twenty reasons in your second book, page 171. Only you must take knowledge of your gross oversight in the latter reason, where the question being of the true matter of the church, you bring in Noah in the old world, and Lot in Sodom unpolluted, as though the world and Sodom had been true matter of the church, and Noah and Lot of the same religious communion with them. The like ignorance you show in the eighth reason, where you demand why the fellowship in civil society should not be polluted, as well as religious communion. As though you had never read that the unbelieving husband is sanctified

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by the believing wife, 1 Cor. vii. 14, for civil society, which is no way dissolved, no not though the one party be a Turk, Jew, or atheist. And do you think, Mr. B. that religious communion may be held with such without pollution?

In the next scripture, which is Gal. v. 10, the apostle no way acquits the church of transgression, but speaks under hope of their repentance, which they were to manifest by avoiding and cutting off such as had troubled and seduced them, Gal. i. 8, 9; v. 12.

In Matt. v. 24, 25, Christ commands that before a man offer his gift he reconcile himself unto his brother. True, but where hatred is, there is no holy reconciliation: and where brotherly admonition is not, and that to the reformation of the brother offending, there is hatred, as is manifest, Lev. xix. 17. And if you would improve to the right use this scripture, it would drive you and others from your Corban, till you had discharged the duties of mercy to your brethren, which the Lord accepts above sacrifice.

Touching 1 Cor. xi. which is the next scripture, I will speak something more largely, because Mr. B. thinks it most pregnant for the deciding of the controversy, for that the apostle speaking purposely of the pollution of the sacrament, bids every man examine himself, and not one another, and that under pain of eating damnation to himself, and not to another, if he come not reverently, notwithstanding there was much evil in the church.

And is it so indeed, that, because men must examine themselves, therefore, not others? what warrant then have you for your Easter-shrive,* your examining the people before they communicate? You I hope, are to examine yourself, as well as others. And might not your people tell you out of your own book, that you have nought to do to examine them? Might not the meanest of them say unto you, Examine yourself: if I eat and drink unworthily, it shall be mine own damnation, not yours? Yea, might not any ungodly person thus answer either officer, or brother, that should reprove him either publicly, or privately? This indeed is the common fashion in the Church of England, and nothing more common: and it is a received rule, that every man shall answer for himself, and every

* Shriving or confessing to a priest at Easter.

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tub stand upon his own bottom, and brotherly admonition is accounted by the most but a precise curiosity of busy-headed people. And in this you confirm them, by your collection: teaching the offenders to "pull away the shoulder, and to stop the ear, that they might not hear, to make the heart hard, as an adamant stone." Zech. vii. 11, 12. You do then err, Mr. Bernard, in expounding 1 Cor. xi. 18 exclusively. It doth not follow, that because I am bound to examine myself, therefore not my brother, that is, not to observe him, admonish him, and bring him to repentance for apparent sin, for of such an examination we only speak, leaving to a man's self the examination of the heart, and of things secret. You may as well argue thus. We are to "save ourselves," Acts ii. 40, to "speak unto ourselves in psalms," &c., Eph. v. 19, to "teach and admonish ourselves," Col. iii. 16, to "comfort ourselves," 1 Sam. xxx. 6, to "edify ourselves," Jude 20, and therefore neither to save, nor to speak to, nor to teach, nor to admonish, nor to comfort, nor to edify others: which is contrary to these, amongst many other scriptures: Jude 23; 1 Thess. iv. 18; v. 11, 18.

Furthermore you yourself, page 120, of this book, make, and that truly, the "Lord's Supper a testimony of that visible communion of love amongst the members." Except then there be that love, which is there testified, the Lord's ordinance is profaned, and his name taken in vain. Now where admonitions are not for the purging, gaining, humbling, and saving of the offender, Mat. xviii. 15; 1 Cor. v. 5; ii. 6, 7, there is not true love but hatred, Lev. xix. 17. And that true spiritual love required in the members of Christ's body should be betwixt the servants of God, and notorious profane persons, either way, passeth both mine understanding and affections. And to conclude this point, I would but desire you Mr. B. to read the marginal note given in your authorized Bible, printed at London 1603, upon the 31st verse of this chapter.

And thus you see how pregnant this scripture is to decide the controversy, and to determine against you, that except reformation of sin be orderly sought, and seasonably obtained, there can be no right or lawful communion in the Lord's Supper. And Paul in writing as he doth, provokes as every man specially to look to himself, so the whole church

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together to see the reformation of the disorders amongst them, ver. 17, 18, 33, 34.

Lastly, For 2 Cor. xii. 21, it must be considered that the case was depending, and in hand concerning such as had sinned and not repented, and as the issue of things should be, so were the godly to carry themselves towards them: if they would be drawn to repentance, by admonition, they were to forgive them as 2 Cor. ii. 7, if not, the church was bound to judge, and cut them off, whether Paul came, or no. 1 Cor. v. 11—13. Wherein if they failed, God would punish their carnal security and want of zeal, as he threateneth. Rev. iii. 14, 16, 19.

On being affected by the Sin of Others.

To proceed, where you affirm that our position insinuates, that the sin of one dissolves the bond of allegiance between God, and another, it is nothing so. The sin and apostacy of others can no way hinder or prejudice our salvation, or standing with God, if we discharge our duty towards them. But here is the oversight, that men consider not, that, as God hath commanded men to worship him, receive the sacraments, and to use other his ordinances, so he hath also called, and separated unto himself a church, a communion, or fellowship of saints, and holy ones, in and amongst which those holy things are to be used, Psa. cxlvii. 19; Rom. iii. 2; ix. 4, and that we are as well to look in what fellowship and communion we receive the holy things of God, as what the things are we do receive. And as in the natural body there must first be a natural union of the parts with the head, and one with another, before there can be any action of natural communion either between the head and the members, or one member and another: so in the spiritual body, the church, the members must first be united with Christ the head, and become one with him, before they can any way partake in his benefits, or have communion with him, either in the merits or virtue of his death, and obedience, John xv. 2, 4, 5; Rom. viii. 1, as also one with another, as members of the same body, under him the head, before they can communicate in their works, or operations. Communion in works, and actions, doth necessarily presuppose union of persons.

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And if it be true which Mr. B. labours so much to justify, both in his former* and latter writing,† that a man is only to look to his own person, that it be holy, and to the thing in hand, that it be commanded of God, and that it matters not, to how unholy a society this holy person adjoins himself, in the communion of this holy thing, then may he lawfully repute, and acknowledge an assembly of atheists, heretics, and idolaters, though as the assembly gathered, Mark v. 9, usurping the holy things of God, for the temple of the living God, and for his sons and daughters, among whom he doth dwell, and walk there. 2 Cor. vi. 16, 18. There may he call upon God, as their common Father, and say with faith, as Christ hath taught his disciples, "Our Father," Mat. vi. 9; there may he have "communion in the body and blood of Christ, as with the members of Christ." 1 Cor. xi. 16, 17. But the Lord Jesus in teaching his church, with one heart and voice, to say "Our Father," hath established another brotherhood; and in giving his body and blood to be eaten and drunken of all, in communion, Matt. xxvi. 26, 27; 1 Cor. xi. 16, 17, hath knit in one another society. The apostle writing unto the church of Corinth, compares the whole church to a man's body, and the persons in the one, to the members of the other, viz. to the head, foot, eye, ear, hand, and other parts, 1 Cor. xii.; and endeavouring purposely to draw them to the right use of those spiritual gifts, wherewith they abounded, without contempt, or envy, he shows that all have need, and use, each of others, the head of the foot, the hand of the eye, and so mutually one of another, and that without the help each of other, neither could consist. Now since every part stands need of other, even the head, the chiefest, of the feet the meanest, doth it not concern the head to consider what a foot it hath? the eye to see what an hand it hath? and so every member to forecast, that it be coupled with such other members in this body mystical, as may not fail it in the time of need. "Woe be to him that is alone," saith the wise man, "for if he fall there is not a second to lift him up, but if two be together the one will lift up his fellow, if he fall." Eccles. iv. 9, 10. And how behoveful both for the comfort and safety of the several

* Christian Advertisements, pp. 104—107.

† Plain Evidences, pp. 171—174.

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members, and whole body it is, that jointly and severally, all and every part be so fitted and furnished, as they may faithfully discharge their duties, and afford their service upon occasion, and as need stands; and how great not only the discomfort, but the danger is, when there is a failing this way, both the Word of God and common reason, and every man's own experience will teach him. Whereupon I conclude, that it concerns every man as first, and most, to look to his own person, and to consider how things stand betwixt God and himself; so in the next place to take heed he join himself in such a communion, as wherein he may with comfort call upon God as a common Father, and partake in his ordinances by a common right to him, and the rest: and that being so joined, he fail not the body, or any member of it, as there is need of his help and service, otherwise Mr. B.'s reasons will not bear him out, no, not though for scores, he put hundreds, which being compared with the scriptures, and grounds from them formerly laid down, will appear to be the very froth of his own lips, neither solid nor savoury.

On Separation in General.

Next Mr. B. reduceth to certain heads such places of Scripture, as forewarn God's people to separate themselves, and that first under the law, as 1. from idols of false gods, as Israel from Egyptian, Babylonish, or heathenish gods, and idolaters dwelling about them. 2. From idols of the true God, as Judah from Israel in Jeroboam's time, and after. 3. From persons ceremonially polluted, in the time of the gospel. 1. From Jews not receiving Christ, but railing against him. 2. From Gentiles without Christ. 3. From Antichrist under the show of Christ, persecuting Christians. 4. From familiarity private, with men excommunicate, or of lewd life, &c., which places, you say, no way concern you at all, and so you give a very ample testimony of yourselves, if we durst believe your words, against our own knowledge.

Your first head I let pass; and in answer unto your second, affirm thus much, that in your constitution, you are partly as the Egyptians in respect of your bondage: partly as the Babylonians in respect of your confusion; and partly

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as Jeroboam's church in respect of your apostacy in your devised priesthood, sacrifices, and holy days: the Lord having appointed no such ministry as your priesthood, no such sacrifice as your service-book, no such holy days as your single and double feasts, which you have forged of your own hearts.

Touching separation from persons ceremonially polluted, it must be considered, that ceremonies have their signification, and shadows their substance. The ceremony then was, that, whosoever touched a dead person, or a person, or thing unclean, was unclean: and whom, or whatsoever the unclean person touched, that person or thing was unclean: so that a person unclean did not only pollute the thing he touched to himself, as Mr. B. would have it, but to others also: whosoever touched the thing that he touched, was polluted by it. Numb. xix. 13, 22: Lev. xv. 4—11, 19—21, &c. What is then the substance of these ceremonies? Who is now a leper, but he which hath the leprosy of sin arising in his forehead? Who hath an issue of blood upon him, but he in whose soul and body the issue of sin runneth unstopped? Who is the dead person now that may not be touched without pollution, but he that is dead in trespasses and in sins? And who toucheth such an unclean person, if he that becomes and remains one body with him, by spiritual communion, and a member of him, touch him not? Rom. xii. 4, 5; 1 Cor. x. 16, 17; xii. 12, 13.

Thirdly, If separation be lawful from persons not receiving Christ, but railing against him, then is communion unlawful with any assembly in the land, wherein there are many, which remain in unbelief as their works declare, James ii. 20, and so receive not Christ, John i. 12, but do on the contrary both revile and persecute him in his graces, servants, and ordinances: howsoever for fear or fashion, they be content to be accounted Christians.

Now for separation from Gentiles without Christ, and from Antichrist, under a show of Christ persecuting Christians, as the Scriptures do account of antichristianism, as of heathenism in this respect, calling it Babylon, Sodom, Egypt spiritually, and so warning the Lord's people to come out of it, Rev. xi. 8; xiv. 8; xviii. 2, 4: so for the second point, I do not yet believe, whatsoever you

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write, but you, Mr. Bernard, are as verily persuaded as myself, that the Church of England, formally considered in her laws, and canons ecclesiastical, contrived, and executed by the prelates, and their substitutes, doth persecute Christians under a show for Christ. That the bishops make a show for Christ, all grant: and that they persecute true Christians, let your prisons be searched, and there will want no records: and if you yet will pass by the poor brethren of the separation, as the priest and Levite did the wounded man, which had fallen among thieves, Luke x., and will take no knowledge of us, ask your own brethren, the godly ministers, with whose supply against us, you back your book; and I doubt not, but the suspensions and deprivations of the most of them for refusing the prelates' badges, and liveries, the surplice, tippet, and the like, will testify with us, the persecutions of the antichristian prelacy, against Christians.

The separation you admit of, in the last place, is "from familiar accompanying in private conversation with men excommunicate, or of lewd life worthy to be excommunicate, when neither religion commandeth," &c.

What, Mr. B., ought men to avoid familiarity with excommunicates only in private conversation, and not both in the private and public worship of God? Is there any religious familiarity, or communion save in the church, out of which excommunicates are cast? The Jews had no religious communion at all with heathens, or persons uncircumcised, Ezek. xliv. 7, 9, which therefore might not enter into the sanctuary of the Lord, though you be driven in answer to Acts xxi. 28, 29, to affirm they might, Book ii. page 175: and as such, must we account them that refuse to hear the church, Matt. xviii. 17. And as no religious communion, either private, or public, may be held with persons justly excommunicated by the church, so neither with such lewd persons, as deserve excommunication, and are thereof clearly convinced, though the church want grace to cast them out. The church's ungodly connivancy, and upbolstering them in their scandalous sins, makes them nothing the better, but itself, in truth, like unto them, as he that brought a thing abominable into his house, was accursed like it, Deut. vii. 26; Josh. vii.: how much more,

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if he either bring it into, or keep it in God's house! And how we are to avoid persons incorrigibly wicked, whether idolators, heretics, or profane livers, the common bonds of natural and civil society ever kept inviolated, which as they are to the Lord, so ought they to be unto us abominable, see these scriptures, Acts ii. 40, 47; xix. 19; Rom. xvi. 17; 1 Cor. v. 11; 2 Cor. vi. 14—17; Gal. i. 8, 9; 1 Tim. vi. 3—5; 2 Tim. iii. 2—5; Tit. iii. 10, which places do not only forbid private and voluntary familiarity, as you speak, and affirm, but religious also, to which you unskilfully oppose voluntary, where no society is so voluntary, as that which is religious, and that both private and public. Neither is there any reason, whether we respect the glory of God, or our own safety, or the avoiding of offence in others, or the shaming of the parties, why we should avoid civil communion with any, and yet hold religious communion with them. To conclude, since the Lord will be glorified by his people, not only severally, and in their persons, but jointly, and in their holy communion, and hath given them in charge to exhort, comfort, admonish, and reprove one another as there is cause, and in the order he hath prescribed; as also according to the same order, to sequester, censure, reject, and avoid persons incorrigible, and infectious, the brother or brethren failing in these duties, are stained, and polluted, not by other men's sins, which can no way hurt them, or the holy things they use, save to themselves, but by their own swerving, and neglect from and of such duties, as wherein they are to acquit themselves, in their most strait, and sacred bond of communion. Only before I end, I must touch one point of deep divinity set down by Mr. B. for the purpose in hand: which is, that the Lord takes a people to be his, before he commands them: and that commandments are for his people to rule them, not to make them his people, Book ii. p. 176.

But how agrees this, to let pass his former book, with that which he not only writes, but substantially proves, page 277, of his second, that, when the Lord sets up a people to be his people, first he gives them his Word, which is his ordinance to make them his people, his power to subdue them, the means of reconciling them,

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that by which he extols a people above other people? Well, Mr. B., (to let pass your inconsiderate lightness in those weighty matters, wherein you exceed Mr. Smyth, for that where he confutes one book by another, you confute yours by itself in another place,) howsoever your national church were not made the Lord's people by his commandments, but by the commandments, precepts, and proclamations of men, yet would the Lord Jesus have his churches gathered, and men made his people, by the publishing and preaching of his commandments, wherewith he furnished his apostles for the making of disciples, by the knowledge, faith, and obedience of them. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

Eighth Error.

The eighth error laid to our charge is, our holding, "That every of their assemblies are false churches."

If one of them be, then are they all, for they are all, and every one of them cast in the same mould? We profess we put a great difference betwixt person and person amongst you, and do not doubt, God forbid we should, but there are hundreds, and thousands amongst you, having assurance of saving grace, and being partakers of the life of God, in respect of your persons: but considering you in your church-communion, and ordinances, we cannot so difference you, but must testify against your apostacy, as we do. And let it not be grievous unto you, Mr. B., or unto any other, that in this regard, we speak thus generally and alike of you all, without exception: for even your own church intendeth you all, and every one of you alike, without exception: as appeareth, in that it appointeth one set service in so many words to be said, by all and every minister, to all and every parish, and person in it. It appoints one set form of words, wherein all persons, without exception, must be married; all women, without exception, after child-bearing purified; all children born in the kingdom baptized; all sick persons visited; and all dead persons buried, without exception. How shall we then sever you in the things, wherein you join yourselves? or put a difference where yourselves put none?

And where further, as loth to let fall the plea of the

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wicked, you do add, that God called Israel his people after defection, and their children in respect of circumcision his children, Ezek. xvi. 21, 22. I answer, first, that the Lord did not call them his children in respect of circumcision, for the "Shechemites were circumcised," Gen. xxxiv. 24, and yet were not God's people, nor their children, his children; and secondly, that the prophet speaks of the first-born, which by right did in a special manner appertain to the Lord, Exod. xiii. 2, though he were most injuriously defrauded of his due. Where you proceed and say, that some in the Acts xix. 2, which were ignorant of the Holy Ghost, were called believers, that is too grossly applied to the ordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, which is meant of such extraordinary visible gifts, as wherewith God did for a time beautify the church, which these persons also there spoken of, did afterwards receive by imposition of hands by Paul, ver. 6.

For the churches of Corinth, and Pergamos, with whose corruptions as with a buckler, you would cover yourselves, it must be remembered, that they, and every person in them, were in their constitution, separated by voluntary profession into covenant with the Lord, and did with their covenant receive power and charge to reform such evils as might break out amongst them, which if they neglected, they brake covenant with God, and so forfeited, on their part, both their covenant, and power, provoking the Lord, if they repented not to break with them, and shortly to remove their candlestick out of his place, Rev. ii. 5.

That which you add the last, and indeed the worst of all the rest, is, "that the church of Christ is set out even by the naming, that is by the profession of the name Jesus Christ." Rom. xv. 20.

But the apostle intends no such matter, but only to magnify his apostleship by this amongst other the notes of it, that he had preached the gospel, where before there had been no sound of it. And if the naming of Jesus Christ set out a church, then are the Papists, besides other heretics, a true church, for they name Jesus Christ, as often as you, and with as many courtesies.

But things are best discerned in their particulars, and to them you descend, saying, that that congregation which

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is false, hath a false head, false matter, false form, and false properties, which, say you, "cannot be avouched against our congregations."

And what if but some of these be false, and not all? To make a thing true must concur all the essential parts and properties: but to make it false, there needs not be all false, some few will do it. For the particulars.

You have no false head, because you hold Jesus Christ, and worship no other God, but the Trinity in unity.

The Papists also worship the Trinity in unity, and in word, and in the general, confess Christ their head: and you in deed, and in the particulars, many of them, do deny his headship.

Christ is the head only of his body, Col. i. 17. But the body of Christ consists not of the limbs of Satan, of which your national church was for the most part gathered, and compact, after the general apostacy of Antichrist, and of such it consists at this day: except you will deny that they are the limbs of Satan, the eyes of whose minds he blindeth, that the light of the gospel should not shine in them, 2 Cor. iv. 4: which do the lusts of the devil and are his children, John viii. 44: which commit sin: which persecute the godly, 1 John iii. 8; and cast in prison the servants of Christ. Rev. ii. 10. Now tell me not, Mr. B., of the wicked persons in the churches of Corinth, Thyatira, and the rest; for these churches were not gathered of any such outwardly, and so appearing: it is blasphemy against the apostles so to affirm: and if any appearing such were afterwards suffered, it was a canker in the churches which in time ate out the hearts of them. As, therefore, the Papists make the church a monstrous body, in setting two heads over it, Christ, and the Pope; so do you make Christ a monstrous head, in uniting unto him members of so contrary a nature. And, let the profane world make as small account of it as they list; it is certain, no false doctrine, heresy, or idolatry can more either displease or dishonour God, and his Christ, than wretched men, in word professing his truth, and name, and in deed denying both him, and them.

Further you have not Christ the head of your church in the administration of his prophetical, priestly, and kingly office: which I will only point at, referring the reader to

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such other treatises, as do more fully confirm these things, and in special to Mr. Ainsworth's arguments disproving the present estate and constitution of the Church of England; against which his plain proofs your idle exceptions Mr. B. will be as easily answered, as read.*

First, then, your church admitteth not of the ordinance of prophesying, or teaching out of office, Rom. xii. 6, 7, which as I have formerly proved to be a perpetual ordinance for the church, so how profitable it is, both for the edification of them within, and conversion of them without, we find by experience, and the Scriptures declare. 1 Cor. xiv. 3, 24, 25.

Second, You silence the Lord Jesus, in your church, from revealing the whole will of his Father. A part of his Word is utterly excluded by your calendar, and may not so much as be read in your church, but is jostled out by the apocryphal writings: a greater part even the most of that which concerns the true gathering, and governing of the visible church, though it may be read, yet may it not be faithfully taught, much less obediently practised: notwithstanding any charge of the prophets, apostles, and Christ himself. Deut. xxix. 29; Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Rom. xvi 25, 26; 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17, so that though you have the whole will of God in your books, as Papists have, yet in respect of the doctrine, and obedience of a great part of it, the book is sealed up, and may not be opened. And to make up the measure, you have instead of the canonical Scriptures of the Holy Ghost, men's apocryphal scriptures, the books of homilies, and that of common prayers, your popish canons, and constitutions, which are as well the doctrine of your church, as the canons of the Tridentine Council are the doctrine of the Church of Rome; and, if you will, instead of prophets to teach, your significant ceremonies, the cap, surplice, cross, tippet, which are "neither dark, nor dumb, but apt to stir up the dull mind of man to the remembrance of his duty to God, by some notable signification." Here is dross for silver, and for the finest wheat, chaff.

Lastly, Your prophets which administer that part of Christ's prophecy, or of the Scriptures, which may be

* Counterpoyson. Ed. 1608, p. 127.

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taught, and practised amongst you, have neither the true office of ministry, which Christ hath prescribed, nor a lawful calling to that they have: as hath been in part noted from Eph. iv. and is elsewhere clearly evinced.

Now Christ's priestly office you do corrupt, and profane unsufferably, whether we respect the persons, or things whereof you make him a mediator.

Are those atheists, and ungodly persons, wherewith you confess in the beginning of your book, your church is full, and which if you should deny, heaven and earth would witness against you, are they I say, their souls, and bodies, those lively, holy, and acceptable sacrifices, and offerings sanctified by the Holy Ghost? Rom. xii. 1; xv. 16.

Are those devised, printed, and stinted collects, read out of your human service-book, the spiritual sacrifices of prayer, and thanksgiving, which the Spirit of God teacheth the sons of God to offer, the fruits and calves of the lips which confess his name? Rom. viii. 26, 27; 1 Cor. xii. 7.

Is that constrained payment of a weekly or monthly rate and assessment for the poor, more fitly called a malevolence, for the ill-will it is paid with, than a benevolence, that gracious cheerful care for the saints, that freewill offering of love, and mercy, that sweet-smelling odour, that acceptable, and well-pleasing sacrifice unto God? Heb. xiii. 15; Hos. xiv. 3; 2 Cor. viii. 1, 4; ix. 5, 7; Phil. iv. 18; Heb. xiii. 16.

Are these, I say, those sacrifices, for which Jesus Christ the eternal high priest appeareth for ever before his Father in heaven, that he might offer them unto him in the golden censer, perfumed with the odours of his own righteousness? or are they to be sanctified by the golden altar of his merits standing before the throne of God? Rev. viii. 3, 4; Matt. xxiii. 19.

A less indignity sure it was to lay upon the material altar in the tabernacle, or temple, dogs, swine, vultures, and all unclean beasts, and birds, with their dirt and dung, than thus to lay upon this heavenly altar, those unclean beasts, and birds, whereof Babylon is an habitation, and cage. Rev. xviii. 2.

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On the Kingly Office of Christ.

And for Christ's kingly office, who is able to set down the indignities and outrages offered in your church to the sceptre thereof?

For first, where Christ reigneth as the King in Sion, his holy mountain, ruling over his servants and subjects only, as the King of saints, Rev. xv. 3, under his Father, you have gathered him a kingdom, and crowned him the king thereof, contrary to his express will, of known traitors and rank rebels unto his crown and dignity: even of such as do visibly and apparently fight for Satan, and his kingdom, the kingdom of darkness, hating, deriding, and persecuting to the utmost of their power, all such as desire to please and serve Christ in any sincerity. Of such, and none other, doth the body of your church consist, for the greatest part, as all amongst you that fear God will testify with me.

Secondly, Where Christ ruleth over his subjects by the sceptre of his holy Word, which is a sceptre of righteousness, Psa. xlv. 6: in the place of it, the ungodly canons and constitutions of popes and prelates must, and do bear sway. Such subjects, such laws. And say not, Mr. B. as you do, in answer to Mr. Ainsworth, page 259, that "you acknowledge no other lawgiver over your consciences in matters of faith, and obedience, between Christ, and you, save him alone." For what doth your church representative but bind conscience, in binding men to subscribe to the hierarchy, service-book, and ceremonies, *sponte et ex animo?* in pressing men to the use of things reputed indifferent, absolutely, and whether they offend, or offend not; in tying men to a certain form of prayer, and thanksgiving: excommunicating men for the refusal, and omission of these, and the like observances of their laws? And what do you but loose and unbind the conscience, in tolerating, yea, approving, yea, making and ordaining unpreaching ministers, and in binding the people, under both civil and ecclesiastical penalties, to their ministrations, in their own parishes, and from others? And what do you else in your dispensations for pluralities, non-residency, and the like? Are not these matters of conscience with

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you, Mr. B. wherein your laws and lawmakers bind and loose, as they list? All the laws and ordinances for the ministry and government of the Jewish Church, were matters of faith and obedience between God and the church, binding the consciences of the people: and is the new testament less perfect than the old? and the laws, and ordinances for the administration of it less excellent, and of a baser foundation than the former? It matters not what your words are, since it appears by your deeds, that you usurp the throne of Christ, in appointing officers, and making laws for the government and administration of his kingdom the church: and those many of them to the abolishing of his, herein rather holding Christ as a captive, than honouring him, as a king.

Third, Where Christ hath given to his church liberty, power, and commandment, every one of them severally, and all of them jointly to reprove and reform disorders, and whatsoever is found whether person or thing, faulty, and disagreeing unto his Word: alas! this liberty is enthralled, this power lost, this commandment made of no force. The prelates have seized all these royalties into their hands, as though they alone were made partakers of Christ's kingly anointing, and were as kings to rule in his church. Here is a king in a great measure without subjects, without laws, without officers, without power.

But here I must needs observe a few things about two answers given by Mr. B. in his second book, pages 260, 261, to two of Mr. Ainsworth's objections about the matter in hand. To the former being about the officers of Christ in the church, he answereth, that they have Christ's officers appointed to govern; the civil magistrate, the king's majesty, the ruling elder, next under Christ, &c. and the ecclesiastical governors under him, the bishops, who are also pastors and doctors.

But you should have considered, Mr. B. that the question is not about civil but ecclesiastical governors. The king indeed is to govern in causes ecclesiastical, but civilly, not ecclesiastically, using the civil sword, not the spiritual for the punishing of offenders. And if the king be a church officer, then he is, first, a king of the church. Second, To be called to his office, and so deposed from it

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by the church, or at least by other ecclesiastical persons, by whom alone you will have church officers made. And lastly, if the king be such a ruling elder, as the Scriptures speak of, he is inferior to the teaching elders, and deserves less honour than they. For so the apostle orders things. Rom. xii. 7, 8; 1 Tim. v. 17.

Now in making your bishops, pastors, and doctors, you are doubly forgetful of yourself; and doubly injurious unto them, and which is worse than both the rest, you sin against the Lord, and his truth. For the first, in your former book you made your bishops chief officers in the church, and the successors of the apostles, and evangelists, and here you make them pastors, and teachers, which are the lowest orders of officers that Christ gave for the work of the ministry. Eph. iv. 11. 2. If your bishops be pastors, and teachers of their office, what are you, and the rest of your rank? You and they have not the same office, but you an office under them, and so pastors and teachers being the lowest order that Christ hath left in his church, your order must needs be something under the lowest, and of another's leavings than Christ's. 3. In making your bishops the pastors and teachers of the Church of England, or the particular churches in it, you lay to their charge an accusation, which they will never be able to answer at the day of the Lord, which is, their not feeding of so many thousand sheep committed unto them to be fed, and taught by them. Lastly, Nothing is more untrue, and disagreeable to the Word of God, than that your provincial and diocesan bishops are the pastors and teachers given by Christ to his church. There were no other ordinary officers left or appointed by the apostles in the churches but such as were fixed to particular congregations, ordinarily called bishops or elders, Acts xiv. 23; xx. 17, 28; Phil. i. 1. And if it can be showed, that, by the Word of God any other officers were left, or appointed in the church after the extraordinary officers, apostles, prophets, evangelists, whose gifts and places were extraordinary, besides such bishops, and elders, as were limited to particular churches, I will yield this whole cause in the point of the ministry, and so profess.

The other of Mr. B.'s answer I mind, is, about the power

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of Christ against sin, Satan, Antichrist, the want whereof, Mr. Ainsworth and that truly, objecteth against the English assemblies. Mr. B.'s defence summarily is, that, there is in the Church of England, the preaching of the Word, which is the power of Christ, Rom. i. 18, as also excommunication, though not in every parish, yet in the Church of England in which is comprehended all parishes, and all superior power over them.

For which let the reader observe these particulars.

First, A national church since Christ's death, and the dissolution of the Jewish Church, is a monstrous compound, and savours of Judaism.

Secondly, If the main part of the power of Christ be to be administered in a particular congregation, by the ordinary officers thereof, namely, the preaching of the gospel, why not the inferior part, the censures also, save that the bishops to lord it over all, will keep this rod in their own hands?

Thirdly, The ministers whose judgments and reasons you avouch, both say, and prove, in the latter end of your book, page 180, that this power is given to a particular congregation of faithful people.

Fourthly, You yourself lay it down, page 92, as a main ground against popularity, and withal sundry scriptures to prove it, that Christ hath appointed the same sorts of men in his church "for preaching, administration of the sacraments, and government."

Lastly, It is apparent, that the particular church of Corinth gathered together in the name of the Lord Jesus, had the power of the Lord Jesus, 1 Cor. v. 4, 5, for excommunication: and so hath every other faithful assembly in the world, as they had, which since your assemblies are not, they may want this power without any great wrong: the evil only is, that it resteth in a worse place, than the worst parish assembly, the bishop's court, or consistory.

I proceed. Only my desire is, that the things which I have noted touching Christ's kingly office, be the more carefully observed by all the people of God, and servants of Jesus, in respect of that most direct opposition, which in those latter days is made against it, and the administration thereof. For as in the first times after Christ's coming

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in the flesh, his prophetical office was directly impugned, by Jews and heathens, so as it was not lawful to speak in his name, Acts iii. 22, 23; iv. 2, 17, 18, and since that, his priesthood by the mass-priesthood, and sacrifices in the popish church, so now in the last place doth Satan in his instruments bend his force most directly against, and with might and main oppose the sovereignty and crown of our Lord Jesus, that he may not rule in his church, by his own officers, and laws.

On Profession of Religion.

The matter, you say, is not false, and to show this you note a difference between true matter, false matter, and no matter. As you speak that, which neither any other, nor yet yourself, can understand of false matter, so you call them no matter, which make no profession of Christ at all, as "Jews, Turks, Pagans;" and "all them true matter, to wit, visible, which openly profess this main truth, that Jesus, the Son of Mary, is the Son of God, Christ the Lord, by whom only and alone they shall be saved."

Many grievous errors are bound up in this invective of Mr. Bernard's, but for profaneness, this one surmounts them all. For what can be spoken more prejudicial to the glory of God, or derogatory to the body of Christ, than that any person, but pronouncing so many words, how filthy and flagitious soever he be in his life, or what errors soever he mingle with this truth, is notwithstanding true visible matter of the church, or a true member of Christ's body visibly, or so far, as men can judge, and so must be received and acknowledged.

Against this odious and profane error, I will first deal by some clear arguments proving the contrary, and then come to the allegations he makes for his ungodly purpose.

If all, that profess this main truth, Jesus the Son of Mary, &c., be true matter of the church, than are most notable heretics true matter of the church. The Apellites, Cerdonians, and Marcionites holding two contrary beginnings, or Gods, the one good, the other evil: the Macedonians denying the Holy Ghost to be God: the Cerinthians holding that Christ is not yet risen from the dead: the Paternians affirming the inferior parts of the body of

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man to be created of the devil: the Patricians* holding so of the whole body: the Novatians, and Cathari, denying repentance to them that sin: the Nicolaitanes holding community of all things: the Schwenckfeldians, and Enthusiasts† denying the outward ministry, and waiting upon the revelation of the Spirit alone: and with these many others, as ill, or worse than they, professing notwithstanding this main truth, as the most of them did, and do.

Then are excommunicates, true matter of the church, though cast out for notorious wickedness, for many of them hold these main truths, and many more, yea more than Mr. B. himself doth.

Then is the true matter of the world, and limbs of the devil, for such are all wicked persons whatsoever truth they profess, John viii. 44; xv. 19; Rom. vi. 16; 2 Tim. ii. 26; 1 John iii. 8, 12, true matter, and members of the church.

"They that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh, with the affections, and lusts of it." Gal. v. 24, therefore persons visibly wicked are not visibly Christ's, and so not visibly or in respect of men, true matter of the church, or members of his body.

* *Patricians* and *Paternians*, sects nearly identical, of the second century; who contended that the flesh was not the work of God, but of the devil, and therefore was to be mortified and hated, and might be destroyed. They condemned the use of marriage, wine, and animal food. They used water only in the administration of the Lord's Supper.

† The *Schwenckfeldians* were the followers of Schwenckfeld, who flourished in Germany about the middle of the sixteenth century, who objected on some points to the Lutheran doctrine, and advocated strictness of discipline. He held peculiar notions respecting the internal Word, which he called Christ, and seemed thereby to depreciate the Scriptures. He likewise pretended to immediate revelations; and maintained that all the ministrations of unconverted preachers are inefficient.

Enthusiasts is a name given to the Messalians or Euchites in the ancient church, who maintained that religion consisted in quietism or a perfect abstraction of the mind from all worldly objects and concerns; and giving themselves to prayer, pretended to be inspired by, and to hold converse with the Holy Spirit. The name is also given to those who have pretended to similar revelations since the time of the Reformation, such as the Anabaptists, Paracelsus, Weigelius, Boehme, Poiret, Dippel, Mad. Bourignon, &c. It was also applied to the Quakers for some time after the rise of that body.

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That which destroys the church, and makes it become either a false church, or no church at all, cannot make a true church, or be the true matter, whereof it is made; for these things are contrary. But wicked men, whatsoever they profess in word, make the church a synagogue of Satan, and very Babylon, which is an habitation of devils, and hold of all foul spirits, Rev. xviii. 2, provokes God to remove the candlestick, that is, to dis-church a people, and to spue them out of his mouth, Rev. ii. 5; iii. 16.

Mr. B. had need be a skilful workman, which can make a true church of Christ of that matter, which makes the true churches planted by the apostles themselves, either false, or no churches at all.

They which are true visible matter of the church, or true visible Christians, have Christ for their king visibly, or in outward appearance, and so far as men can judge: for by visible, we mean that which may be seen of men, opposed to invisible, which only God seeth, for Christ is not divided: but look to whom he is a priest to save them, and a prophet to teach them, to the same persons he is also a king to reign, and rule over them: but he is not a king to any ungodly ones, neither doth he, but Satan, and their lusts reign over them.

If profession in word, with a wicked conversation, make true matter of the church, then an apparent lie, a flat contradiction, a known sin, and that which makes men more abominable, makes them true matter of the church. For he that saith, he hath fellowship with God, or believes in Christ, and yet walks in darkness, doth lie, and doth not truly, 1 John i. 6. He that professeth Christ to be his saviour, and doth wickedness, contradicts himself, for Christ is not a saviour of the wicked, and sins against the third commandment, in taking God's name in vain. Other reasons might be brought for the eviction of this foul and profane error, for truth, unanswerable, and for number sufficient to make a volume: but these may suffice for the present; some other I will intermingle, as occasion shall be offered in the examination of that, which Mr. B. brings for the confirmation of his assertion. For which end he sets down four reasons.

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The True Materials for a Church.

The sum of the three first is thus much: viz. that Christ and his apostles preaching the gospel, such as believed the same, and made profession of it, and of their faith, were without stay or let, received into the church as true matter.

We are as far from denying this order of gathering churches, as you are from enjoying it, Mr. B.: you needed not to have made three distinct proofs of this, which no man denies: nor to have brought so many scriptures as you do, for the confirmation of that, which we grant with you, and practise without you. But herein you deceive the simple reader, in that you separate and disjoin those things, which then were, and always should be joined together: and they are faith, and repentance. These two jointly did Christ himself preach, and John the Baptist before him, and the apostles after him: and these two were preached to, and required of every one both man and woman, which was admitted into the church, Matt. iii. 2, 6; Mark i. 15; Acts xix. 4; Luke xiii. 3, 5; xxiv. 47; Acts ii. 38; viii. 37; xix. 18. But now, because faith and repentance are inward graces residing in the heart, and known to God alone, which knoweth the heart, and that the profession and confession of them are the ordinary means by which these hidden and invisible graces are manifested, and made visible unto men, there was no cause, but they, which made this profession to men, in sincerity, so far as men could judge, should by men be deemed and acknowledged for true members of Christ, and fit matter for the Lord's house. And so, if, by any other means, men manifested themselves to have faith, and holiness wrought in them, though they made neither profession of faith, nor confession of sins, yet were they, and so ought to be, entitled, and admitted to the liberties of the church, as appeareth, Acts x. 44—47. And upon this very ground also it is, that the children of the faithful are of the church, and baptized, though they make no profession of faith at all, because the Scriptures declare them to be within the gracious covenant of God's mercy and love, and under the promises of the gospel, and so by us to be re-

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puted holy. Gen. vi. 2; xvii. 7—10; Deut. xxix. 10—13; Acts ii. 39; Rom. xi. 16; 1 Cor. vii. 14; so that it is not for the profession of faith, *ex opere operato*, or because the party professing utters so many words, that he is to be admitted into the church; but because the church by this his profession, and other outward appearances, doth probably, and in the judgment of charity, which is not causelessly suspicious, deem him faithful and holy in deed, as in show he pretendeth. But that a man of a known lewd conversation and appearing still to remain in his sin, whatsoever in word he professeth, should be received into the church, out of which he ought to be cast though he were one of it, or should have baptism administered unto him, which is as Mr. B. rightly confirms from the Scriptures, the seal of the forgiveness of sins, of new birth, and of salvation, pages 119, 120, being judged not to have the forgiveness of sins, nor to be born anew, nor to be in the estate of salvation, were a most desperate and profane practice, than which I know not, whether the devil hath brought any other into the church, more derogatory to God's glory, or prejudicial to man's salvation. This were to make the way of the kingdom of heaven broad enough by which all the atheists in the world might enter into the church, and certainly would every one of them, if the magistrate should use his compulsive power, as it is in England at this day: yea, a parrot might be taught to say over so many words, yea, the devil himself, though he were known so to be, would not stick for his advantage to utter them, and so might be true matter for Mr. B.'s church.

The material temple was to be built only of costly stones; of cedars, firs, and the like special trees, and those all prepared before hand, hewed, and perfect for the building, so that neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron, was to be heard in the house in the building of it. By the gates of the house were the porters set, that none that was unclean in anything, should enter in. Upon the altar there might be offered no unclean beast, no, nor that which was clean, having a blemish upon it, 1 Kings v. 6, 17, 18; 2 Chron. ii. 8, 9; 1 Chron. xxiii. 19; Lev. xxii. 19—21, &c.; xxvii. 11. And is any rubbish and rifraff now good enough for this spiritual house and temple of

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God, the church, whereof the material temple was but a carnal shadow? may the porters, the officers, let into it, the clean, and unclean, without difference? May dogs and swine, and all unclean beasts and birds promiscuously be offered upon the altar we have in our spiritual tabernacle? God forbid, 1 Pet. ii. 5; 2 Cor. vi. 16; Rev. xi. 1; Heb. xiii. 10. And far be it from the servants of the Lord to prepare his majesty such a house to dwell in, or to defile his holy things with such unclean persons, or to offend his nostrils with the stench of such sacrifices. Yea, whosoever shall bring me this doctrine, that a man of known wicked conversation, without such appearance of repentance, as the church by the Word of God, and rule of charity, is to judge true, may, by warrant of the Word, or practice of the apostles, be received, and admitted into the church, by the prattling of a verbal profession, I will hold that man, yea, though he were an angel from heaven, accursed.

And for the places which Mr. B. brings for this purpose, they are so evident against him, as when I read them, I do even wonder, with what conscience, modesty, or wisdom, he could set them down. They do speak, indeed of faith, and the profession of faith, in, and by such, as were received into the church: but of what faith? of a dead faith without works, as James speaks? or fruitful in evil works, which is worse? nothing less, but of such a faith, as hath the express promise of life eternal annexed unto it, even of that faith, which "purifieth the heart," and "worketh by love" towards God and man, James ii. 26; Acts xv. 9; Gal. v. 6; 1 John v. 1.

The places of scripture are these, Rom. x. 9; John i. 12; iii. 36; John xvii. 3; Acts ii. 36; viii. 37; ix. 20; xi. 26; xvi. 31; xviii. 28; xix. 4, 5; Luke xxiv. 47; 1 Cor. xv. 3; iii. 11. Godly reader, view the places one by one, and see if any one of them speak of a verbal faith, only begot in the mouth, or of such a profession of faith, as hath joined with it a profane conversation; the contrary will appear as clear as the sun, and in it, how evil a concience this man useth thus to pervert the Scriptures to the maintenance of a vile opinion and profane practice.

Your fourth reason to prove that the profession of the

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main truth before laid down is of force to make a true Christian, is, that by it the man so professing doth differ from Jews, Turks, Pagans, and Papists.

He doth indeed, for he is so much worse than they, by his verbal profession of the truth, taking God's name in vain, and dishonouring it far more than the other. 1 Tim. v. 8; Isa. lii. 5; Rom. ii. 24. And what matter is it from whom he differs, that differs not from, but is one of the men of the world, a limb of Satan, and an habitation of his spirit?

Lastly, I desire it may be considered, whether you be not a partial and unequal judge, betwixt the Papists and yourselves. They for shuffling in their works, at a third or fourth hand, with faith in the cause of salvation, must be judged false matter, and their error against the nature of faith in the Son of God, and destroying it, and against the truth of the gospel, because it is against the sacrifice of Christ's priesthood; and yet you, though you yoke Antichrist with Christ, and the Pope's canons with Christ's testament, in the spiritual government of the souls and bodies of his people, and so sin against the sceptre of his kingdom, must be reputed true matter; your error no way against the nature of faith, or truth of the gospel; as though true faith did not as well apprehend Christ a King as a Prophet, in the cause of salvation, though not in the act of justification: and as though the order which Christ hath left, in the Evangelists, Acts, and Epistles to Timothy and Titus, for the gathering and government of his church, were not as well a part of the gospel, and so the object of faith as any other portion of it. Yea to conclude, I tell you Mr. B. and not I, but the Holy Ghost, and I pray you consider it well, that a lewd conversation and evil conscience is as damnable a sin, and as directly against the nature of faith in the Son of God, and the truth of the gospel, and doth as plainly destroy faith, and prejudice salvation, as any either popish or other heresy in the world. Luke xxiv. 47; 1 Cor. v. 11; Gal. v. 19—21; Eph. v. 5, 6; 1 Tim. i. 19; v. 8; 1 John i. 6. But grant, as you would have it, that profession in word with an apparent denial of the same in deed, made a true Christian, or true matter of the church, and that the apostles built the

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Lord's house of such stones, which for me to grant were both folly, and impiety, as it is in you to affirm it, yet would it no way advantage you, nor justify your church. For the profession, by which the apostles, and apostolic churches received members, was voluntary, and personal, freely made by the particular persons which joined themselves unto the Lord, as the scriptures by you quoted prove, as every one that readeth them, may see: but where was or is any such personal, and particular profession used or required of any men, or women, in the replanting of your church after popery? A man may go out of these countries where I now live, as many do, and hire a house in any parish of the land; he is by the right of his house, or farm, a member of the parish church, where he dwells, yea though he have been nursled* up all his life long in Popery or Atheism, and though he were formerly neither of any church, or religion. Yea, though he should profess that he did not look to be saved by Christ only, and alone, but by his good meanings, and well doings; yet if he will come, and hear divine service he is matter true as steel for your church; yea be he of the king's natural subjects, he shall, by order of law, be made true matter of the church, whether he will or no.

And what profession of faith in this very case of salvation, the body of your church makes, or would make, if men freely spake their thoughts, a minister of good note amongst yourselves shall testify out of his own experience. The person is Mr. Nichols, who in his "Plea of the Innocent," page 218, expressly affirms, that conferring with the particular persons in his parish, after he had preached some good space amongst them, about the means of salvation, of four hundred communicants he scarce found one, but that thought, and professed, a man might be saved by his own well-doing, and that he trusted he did so live, that by God's grace he should obtain everlasting life, by serving God, and good prayers. Now how do these agree together? Mr. B. saith that all profess salvation by Christ only, and alone: Mr. Nichols on the contrary affirms out of his own experience, that not one of four hundred so thinks, and professes. And if he, and all the ministers in England

* *Nursled*—brought up.

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should deny it, we ourselves by our own experience know what the faith and persuasion of the multitude in most places is.

Now for your further reasoning, that because a bishop, or two, published this, and some other main truths unto the world, with the approbation of the parliament, and convocation-house, and that some preachers here and there do so teach, therefore all the land so professeth, where many thousands do not so much as understand it, what can be imagined more vain? Can men profess the truth they know not? What is this, but the Papists' implicit faith, when men believe as the church believeth, though they know not what it is? yea and worse than it also, for as we see and know, infinite multitudes believe, and upon occasion profess the contrary. But most vain of all is it to affirm, that because a few godly martyrs have sealed up this, and the like truths with their blood, that therefore they that murdered them, profess the same truth, and are true Christians without any other change wrought in them for the most part, than by the magistrate's sword, and authority. You affirm by way of answer, page 249 of your second book, that the magistrate's compulsion "unto goodness is not hurt unto it, neither makes men unholy, or less good, if they have goodness in them." As it is not simply true you affirm, that the compulsion of men to the faith doth not hurt it; for if the causing the truth to be blasphemed be to hurt it, then the compelling of apparent wicked persons to profess the same, hurts it, as it doth both them, and the church whereof they are; so if the body of the land in the beginning of the queen's reign, were good and holy at all, the magistrate's compulsion wrought it in men, and made them of persecuting idolaters true Christians: for other means intervening, or coming betwixt their profession of the mass and of the gospel, had they none, saving the magistrate's authority.

But here I am by necessity, and in respect of the present matter in hand, drawn into Mr. B.'s second book: and a great benefit were it to me, if there I might find him, though in both unsound, yet one, and the same. But a great trouble it is to walk with a drunken man, and to be bound to follow him in all his vagaries: so is it to deal

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with an adversary light-headed, and dizzy with wrath, vanity and error, whom a man must follow in all his staggerings, and reelings to and fro, and in all the forwards and backwards that he makes, ofttimes going and ungoing again the same by-paths. There is no one thing whereupon Mr. B. labours more in his former book, and for which he brings more reasons, and scriptures, and those often repeated, than to prove the Church of England, or rather such particular churches, as have the Word preached in them, to be truly gathered after the suppressing of popery, and by the order of the apostolic churches: both in respect of separation from idolaters, and antichristian Papists, page 108, as also by profession of the main truth, and some of the gospel, wherein they differed from Jews, Turks, and Pagans, as no matter; and also from Papists as false matter of the church, pages 111—113, 116. And therefore having proved by a multitude of scriptures, that the apostolic churches were gathered by free profession of faith, he concludes thus of them, and of his own church, such as make his profession, are true matter, and so are we; for we all profess this faith, &c., page 113. But now, as though he had either forgotten what he wrote before, or cared not how he crossed himself, so he might oppose us, against whom he hath vowed such utter enmity, he sucks in his former breath, and eats the words he had formerly uttered, peremptorily affirming in his second book, pages 146, 245, 246, that in the reformation of a church after Popery, there is not required any such profession, nor yet the Word of God to go before their reformation, but that the fear of the magistrate's sword is sufficient to recover them, and to settle the people in order to the worship of God. The ground upon which he builds this his new and cross opinion, is, the practice of Asa, Hezekiah, Josiah, and Nehemiah, godly kings and princes of Judah, in the reformation of that church, after her apostacy, in the days of ungodly and idolatrous kings: and, thereupon, taking it for granted, that the catholic visible church of Rome, as it is called, now is, and that the national Church of England in Queen Mary's days and before, when Popery reigned, was, in the same estate with Judah in her apostacy, he concludes thence, that as the

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magistrates then without any voluntary profession, did by force, bring the people of the Jews back from idolatry to the true service of God, so might King Edward, and Queen Elizabeth by force, bring back the people of England into covenant with God, to be his true church, without any such profession of faith, as in the first planting of churches is required. We will then consider this point at large, as being both weighty in itself, and having many others depending upon it.

That Judah was at the first, and so continued, by virtue of the Lord's covenant with her forefathers, on his part faithfully remembered and kept, though by her ofttimes broken, the true church of God, and holy in the root, till she was broken off for unbelief, Rom. xi. 16, 20, after the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, fully published and confirmed by the apostles, I grant with him: but the same or the like things, of the Church of Rome or of England in the respects laid down, may I not acknowledge. That there was at Rome a true church beloved of God, called saints by giving obedience unto the faith, is apparent, Rom. i. 5, 7: but that either the city, or Church of Rome, consisting of many cities and countries, was ever within the Lord's covenant, and holy in the root, as Judah was, may I neither acknowledge, neither can he possibly prove. So for England, I will not deny, but there were, at the first, true churches planted in it, by the preaching of the gospel, and obedience of faith; and these as the other churches in every nation, though in the world, yet not of it, but chosen out of it, and hated by it: men fearing God, and working righteousness, and so being accepted of God, in what nation soever: purchased with the blood of Christ, and so made his flock: saints by calling, and sanctified in Christ Jesus, and calling upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ in every place: such were the churches in Judea, Galilee, and Samaria; the churches in Galatia; the seven churches in Asia; and of such people, gathered into so many distinct assemblies, each entire in herself, having peculiar bishops or elders set over her, for her feeding, by doctrine and government, did those particular churches consist: they thus separated from the rest both Jews and Gentiles in every nation, whether more or less,

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were that chosen generation, that royal priesthood, that holy nation, and purchased people of the Lord. John xv. 19; xvii. 14—16; Acts x. 35; xx. 28; 1 Cor. i. 2; Acts ix. 31; Gal. i. 2, 21; Rev. i. 4; Acts xiv. 23; xx. 17, 28; John i. 1; 1 Thess. v. 12; Tit. i. 5. But that ever the whole nation, and all the king's natural subjects in it, should have been within the covenant of the Lord, and entitled by the word of the Lord, to the seals of the covenant, and all the other holy things depending upon it, is a popular, and popish phantasy, as ever came into man's brain: requiring a new-found land of Canaan, for a seat of this national church, wherein no uncircumcised person may dwell; and a new Old Testament, for the policy and government of the same. And, lastly, it makes all one, them that Christ hath chosen out of the world, and the world; them that fear God, and work righteousness, and whom he accepteth in every nation, and the nation itself: the beloved of God at Rome, and the sanctified in Christ Jesus at Corinth, with the city of Rome, and of Corinth: than which what confusion can be greater?

But to admit that for truth, which you so take, namely that Rome in the sense wherein we speak sometimes was the true church of God, as Judah: and more specially, that the English nation was, as the nation of the Jews, and all and every person in it, high and low, received into covenant with the Lord, to be his people, and that he might be their God: yet can it not be said of Rome, that she still remains the true church of God, as Judah did in her defection: but on the contrary, as she brake her covenant with God, advancing by degrees that man of sin, the son of perdition and adversary, Antichrist, till he was exalted into the throne of Christ, 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4: and that "mystery of godliness," 1 Tim. iii. 16, in, and according to which, that church was planted at the first, degenerated into "the mystery of iniquity," 2 Thess. ii. 7: so did the Lord, for her adulteries, wherein she was incorrigible, when they were come to the height, break the covenant on his part and gave her, as an harlot, a bill of divorce and put her away, and her daughter England with her, amongst the rest.

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Is the Church of Rome a true Church?

Now for the more full clearing of this truth, I will in the first place answer such reasons as Mr. B. brings against it: and that done, lay down certain arguments to disprove his popish plea for that Romish synagogue.

Only, in the meanwhile, I wish him to consider, that, if Mr. Smyth deserve so severe a censure as he lays upon him, page 281 of this book, for some favourable affirmations touching some things and persons in Rome, he himself is much more blameworthy, that both professeth and pleadeth her the true church of Christ, and in the covenant of grace and salvation: than which what greater and more notable plea can be made for her? Nay, if it be probable that he, which pleads for Rome, as Mr. Smyth doth, will in time become in love with it, and sit down a blind papist, it is necessary, that he which thinks it a true church, return unto it, from which he hath wickedly schismed, as all men do that separate from the true church of Christ, for any corruptions whatsoever. Here I do also entreat the prudent reader to bear it in mind that the constitution of the Church of England cannot be justified, nor she proved to be rightly gathered, but with the defence of Rome, yea, of that great and purpled whore to be the true spouse of the Lord Jesus. Rev. xvii. 2, 4.

The reasons by which Mr. B. would prove Rome a true church, are by him reckoned five in number; we will consider of them in order.

The first is taken from the first planting of that church in St. Paul's time, by virtue of which former calling and constitution (saith he), Rome still remains the Lord's people, as Israel did in the wilderness, notwithstanding her idolatry.

I do answer first, that Rome, as we now consider of it, was never the Lord's called, nor under his covenant; though a church or assembly in that city, or it may be more than one, of saints, were; and secondly, that though she were, yet is the covenant broken through her fornications and impenitency in them, both on her part, and the Lord's visibly, and she divorced long ago and her daughters, in and with her.

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His second reason is grounded upon 2 Thess. ii. 4, because Antichrist, that is, saith he, that head with his body sitteth in the temple of God: which, he further tells us, must be understood visibly in respect of the truths of God in doctrine, and ordinances of Christ held there, of which God's people among them partake in his mercy, to their salvation, and others, from time to time, have maintained openly to the preservation of some fundamental points of the apostolical constitution. Whereupon he also concludes, that since the temple of God, typing out the church, wherein he sitteth, hath a true constitution, Rome, and that in respect of the time present, hath a true constitution, and is a true church. He might also have added, and ever shall be a true church, for Antichrist ever shall sit there till Christ's second coming, ver. 8.

Many men have written much about the notes and marks of the true church, by which it is differenced, and discerned from all other assemblies: and many others have sought for it, as Joseph and Mary did for Christ, with heavy hearts, Luke ii. 48, that they might there rest under the shadow of the wings of the Almighty, enjoying the promises of his presence and power. But what needs all this ado? Mr. B. points us out, with the finger, a mark of the true church, most evident, and conspicuous, and like a beacon upon a high hill, and that is, the exaltation of Antichrist. I had thought the churches and people of God should have been known by his dwelling among them, and walking there, and by Christ's presence in the midst of them, Exod. xxv. 8; 2 Cor. vi. 16; Matt. xiii. 20; Rev. i. 13: but I now perceive Antichrist's power, presence, and exaltation is a sure sign, by which the churches of Christ must be discerned. If any therefore desire to plant his feet in the courts of the Lord's house and there to abide for ever, let him be sure to choose such a church to join to, as wherein Antichrist sitteth; and so especially the Church of Rome, because he sits surest there. And it is very like, this is one reason, why Mr. B. is so much persuaded of the Church of England, as of a true church, because he thinks Antichrist sits there in a measure: and it is not impossible, but this may have been some part of the cause, why in former times he was so loth to leave that church, and to join to us,

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when he thought we had the truth, because he perceived we wanted that prerogative of Antichrist's seat, which England enjoys. But though this shows the absurdity of the opinion, yet doth it not answer the objections. I do then answer the same in effect, which Mr. B. makes his fourth argument: namely, that popery, or antichristianism begun not out of Christianity but in the church of God: where it did also by steps advance itself into the very throne of God, and of Christ: and there did in time and by degrees so universally corrupt, and confound both persons and things, as that God could no longer be said to dwell there, by his visible presence, and promises, but Antichrist in his stead: having destroyed the temple of the Lord, the church, and carried captive his people, with the holy vessels into Babylon spiritual: as did the civil Babylonians the material temple, carrying captive with them into Babylon civil, the holy vessels, and other appurtenances thereof, together with a remnant of the Lord's people, of which more hereafter. Only I do in the meanwhile except against two particulars in this second argument. The former is, that Antichrist sitting in the temple of God, namely, so remaining, is that head, with his body. 2 Thess. ii. 4. Antichrist was not in the apostles' time, nor in a long time after, a perfect man, consisting of the head, the pope, and the body, the hierarchy ecclesiastical, but was in the seed only, or as an embryo in the womb, not perfectly framed, much less visibly brought forth, least of all grown to that height, as to jostle with Christ for his throne, yea, to dispossess him of it, as now he doth, and hath done a long season. Secondly, it is not truly affirmed, that because there are some fundamental truths of God in doctrine, and truths in ordinances of Christ, as you Mr. B. speak, held there, that therefore Rome is the true church. How should Antichrist and the devil in him, so effectually deceive with the delusion of vanity and error, if he did not countenance the same with some truths? And do you not think it possible, Mr. B., that any malignant and false churches, should usurp some truths and ordinances of Christ which appertain not unto them? If your argument be good, the Greek churches, the Arians, Anabaptists, Ubiquitarians, yea, and all the assemblies of heretics and

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schismatics in the world, are true churches of Christ; for they all retain many main truths, and ordinances of Christ.

The third argument is, that as the children, or infants of the ten tribes in Jeroboam's apostacy were called the children of God, by circumcision the visible seal of God's covenant, so may the little ones in the Romish church be called Christ's, for that they have received true baptism. And so that Rome hath a true constitution by true baptism in the children, who are Christ's thereby, as the children of the Israelites were the Lord's by circumcision, till by education they be made antichristian, and by that offered up to Antichrist, as the Israelitish children became Molochs, by their fathers' offering them to him.

You do here, Mr. B., in the first place, alter the state of the question in both the terms. The question is, whether the church of Rome be the true visible church of Christ, or no. You, for the Romish church, put the little ones in the Romish church: and instead of their being the visible church, you tell us, they may be called Christ's. Whereas first, those little ones, or infants, are not the church, but the least part of it: and secondly, they are not necessarily either the true visible church, or of it, because they are Christ's, if so they were, in a respect: for God hath his in Babylon, Rev. xviii. 4, which are visible citizens, of that visible city of fornications, though the Lord's, in respect of election, and the beginnings of personal sanctification, whom he therefore calls out of the communion of it, and the abominations therein, under a severe penalty. Secondly, Where you say, that the children in the Romish church have a true constitution by baptism, and are Christ's till by education they be made antichristian, and by it offered up to Antichrist, you seem to make the Church of Rome to be, or to comprehend in it, two distinct, yea two contrary visible churches: a Christian church of infants, before they be capable of education: and an antichristian church of those that are of ripe years. And yet further where you say, that it, for so your words are, "hath a true constitution by true baptism in their children," there it seems, you will have the parents to have one constitution, that is to be one church, with their children, and that true,

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by their true baptism: and so the parents, which by their education, are antichristian, must by the baptism of their children be made christian: and yet the children, by their parents, when they are capable of their education, be made antichristian and offered up to Antichrist. The Scriptures everywhere teach, that parents by their faith, bring their children into the covenant of the church, and entitle them to the promises: Gen. xvii. 7; Acts ii. 39; but that children by their circumcision, or baptism, should constitute their parents in the church, read I not, but in this man's scripture. Yea, most manifest it is everywhere, that wicked parents by their infidelity, or other sins, depriving themselves of the Lord's presence, and covenant, have enwrapped their children in the same evil visibly; secret things ever reserved unto God. Deut. xxix. 29. So Cain going out from the presence of the Lord carried his posterity with him, Gen. iv. 16; vi. 2: so did Ishmael, and Esau theirs, the Ishmaelites, and Edomites. And if the Lord disclaim the mother for a harlot, not reputing her his wife, he accounts the children no better than bastards, on whom he will have no pity. Hosea ii. 2, 4. And if the children of the Jews be not broken off with their parents, for their unbelief, they are successively within the covenant, and of the true church every one of them to this day. Rom. xi. 17. Neither doth this at all cross that which, elsewhere, you object out of the prophet, that the soul that sinneth shall die, and that the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father. Ezek. xviii. 20, &c. For first, the prophet there speaks of such a son as forsakes his father's evil, and practiseth the contrary: otherwise, the Lord threateneth, that he will visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, Exod. xx. 5: yet not so; as the children are without fault, for infants new born by Adam's transgression, and their natural, and original corruption, are children of wrath, and liable to all God's curses, Eph. ii. 3; Psa. li. 5; but the Lord takes occasion by the sins of the parents to execute his justice upon the children, in whose punishments he also punisheth the parents themselves after a sort.

The next thing I observe in this argument is, that you affirm the children of the apostate Israelites to be the

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children of God by circumcision, and infants now to be Christ's by baptism, which you say also constitutes the church: against which popish and anabaptistical error, I do justly except. Popish I call it, for that the papists imagine that by baptism their children are made Christian souls, and in sign of that, they have the font ever standing at the church door: so do the Anabaptists make baptism the form of the church, which you call the constitution, as indeed the form of a thing constituteth it, and giveth being unto it. Whereof if I myself were persuaded, I could not defend the baptism received either in Rome, or England, but I must withal justify both the one and the other for the true church of Christ. But against this unsound opinion both theirs, and yours, I will lay down certain arguments plainly proving the contrary.

(1.) It is the covenant of God, which makes the church, as you yourself both affirm, and prove, page 277 of your 2nd book, of which covenant you also grant in this place, page 132, baptism to be the visible seal, Rom. iv. 11, as was also circumcision in those times; and therefore it is not the covenant itself, but is after it, in the order both of nature and time.

(2.) The Lord had his church before either circumcision or baptism were appointed, which is also one and the same in essence from the beginning to the end of the world; which it could not be, if either circumcision, or baptism, were parts constitutive, or essential of it.

(3.) The Lord made his covenant, and so admitted them into the church, with Abraham and his seed, to be his and their God, in their ages and generations, Gen. xvii. 7: so that the children of Abraham, and of the Jews, were not without the Lord's covenant, and him to be their God, till the time of their circumcision, which was the eighth day; but were born, yea, begot in the covenant, and an holy seed: and therefore the man-child, not circumcised the eighth day, is said to have broken the Lord's covenant, whereof circumcision was a sign. Gen. xvii. 11, 14. To this also add, that the Lord did admit into covenant with himself, accepting them to be his people, Deut. xxix. 10—13, &c.; all, and every one of the Israelites in the wilderness, where notwithstanding all of them in comparison, were uncircumcised. Josh. v. 2—5.

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(4.) If baptism were the constitution of the church, as Mr. B. speaks, then were all heretics and schismatics baptized with water, into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, true Christians, and their assemblies, true churches of Christ: so had the Shechemites been a true church by circumcision, and so of the Ishmaelites, or Hagarians, Gen. xxxiv. 24, which have retained circumcision to this day: the same may be said of the Esauites, and Edomites, which were notwithstanding as far from being true churches, as Mr. B. is from the truth of God, in writing as he doth.

A fourth consideration is to be had of an affirmation by you peremptorily and absolutely made, as though it were without all contradiction, or limitation, in the third argument: and that is, that the baptism in the Romish church is true baptism. Touching which I do commend unto the godly reader this distinction. Baptism is to be considered of us in a twofold respect; first nakedly, and in the essential causes; the matter, water; and the form, the washing with water into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and in this respect, I confess true baptism both in England and Rome. Secondly, It is to be considered of us, *ek peristaseos*, as they speak, and clothed with such appurtenances, as wherewith the Lord hath appointed it to be administered: as for example, a lawful person by whom, a right subject upon which, a true communion wherein, it is to be ministered, and dispensed; in which regards, neither I can approve it, nor Mr. B. manifest it to be true, either in Rome, or in England. When the house of the Lord at Jerusalem was destroyed by the Chaldees, and the vessels thereof, together with the people, carried into Babylon, 2 Kings xxv. 9, 15; Jer. lii. 18, 18; they remained still, both in nature, and right, the vessels of the Lord's house: though in respect of their use, or rather abuse, they became Belshazzar's quaffing bowls. Dan. v. 2, 3. So is it in the destruction of the spiritual house of the Lord, the church, by the spiritual Babylonians, and in the usurpation and abuse of the holy vessels, and in special of this holy vessel of baptism.

Yet is there, in this point, a further consideration to be had of us, unto which both the Scriptures, and our own experience do lead us: namely that, as the Lord hath his

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people in Babylon, his, I mean, both in respect of election, and of personal sanctification: so hath he for their sakes there preserved, notwithstanding all the apostacy, and confusion, which is found in it, sundry his holy truths, and ordinances, amongst which baptism is one. But as this his people, being commingled with the Babylonians in one visible communion, cannot be called the true visible church of God; so neither can these ordinances, in the administration of them, be called the true visible ordinances of Christ, and of his church: but as the Lord's people are commanded to go out of her, Rev. xviii. 4, and to separate themselves, 2 Cor. vi. 17, and so to build the Lord's house anew in Jerusalem, or rather themselves, into a new spiritual house, 1 Pet. ii. 5; 2 Cor. vi. 16, for him to dwell in; so are they to bring with them out of Babylon these ordinances, and in particular this ordinance of baptism, and to enjoy the same, being sanctified, in the right use, and order. All which was livelily shadowed out in the material temple and ordinances, as appeareth Ezra i. 7—11; v. 13—15. And this also may serve for answer to that you bring in your second reason for the justification of Rome in respect of the truths of doctrine, and ordinances there.

In your fourth argument there is little but the answer, of which I formerly spake, unto the second; to wit that "Antichristianism begun in Christianity," which is true, as sourness begins in wine, till by degrees it turn it into vinegar: and as other heresies begun in the Eastern churches, which have notwithstanding long since eaten out the hearts of them, that they cannot, nor could not of long time be called the true churches of Christ. True also is it, which you say that "Antichristianism doth not wholly disannul Christianity:" for, if it did, it were not possible it should deceive so effectually as it doth. How should the devil be believed in so many lies, if he should not in some things speak the truth? But where you further add, that popery is nothing, but idolatrous and heretical corruptions upon the profession of Christian faith, covering it with the same, as Job's body was with sores, and in the more large application of that simile, page 245, do affirm that as he, though covered over with botches, and sores,

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so as he could scarce be known by his friends, was Job still under the sores, and the very same essentially, that he was before, so is the church, and Christianity in popery, though covered with the antichristian corruptions, which Satan hath brought over them; in so saying, you are like yourself, only constant in inconstancy and error.

And tell me I pray you, Mr. B., is the pope's universal supremacy, and headship over all churches, by which also he claimeth power of both the swords, only a scab upon the skin of the true ministry, which Christ hath left in the church, without prejudicing the essence or nature of it? Is the sacrifice of the mass only a sore brought upon the Lord's Supper, under which notwithstanding it lies the very same in nature, and substance, which was by Christ ordained? Is prayer unto saints only a corruption come upon true prayer, but no more against the life of it, than Job's ulcers were against his life, or doth it not destroy the very soul and life of prayer? Is adoration of saints, service in an unknown tongue, with all other the abominations in the mass book, but as a scurf come over that true worship of God wherewith he will be worshipped, John iv. 23, 24, under which the very same true worship lieth, as Job did under his sores, which God hath commanded, and that without any more danger of loss of life, than Job was in by his outside scabs? Lastly, Is the opinion of justification by works, only a botch, and boil upon true faith, but not against the nature of it, nor destroying the essence of it? Your error is sufficiently convinced in the recital and opening of it, in these particulars: your inconstancy and contradiction is most notorious in the last of them, compared with that you write, page 113 of your former book; namely, that the joining of works in the cause of salvation, which the papists do, is against the true nature of faith in the Son of God, and destroyeth it.

That which you call your fifth reason hath no countenance of a reason in it, but is merely a conclusion inferred by you upon your four former reasons, to prove Rome, in respect of the time present, a true church: and the sum of it is that the churches now coming out of Babylon, do not require any new plantation, but only a reformation, as did

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Judah in the time of Hezekiah, after the apostacy of idolatrous Ahaz, and of the people with him. But since the reasons wherewith you would underprop this your inference, are taken away, it must needs fall to the ground. Neither will your Babel stand any whit the stronglier for the daubing you make with this, and the like untempered mortar, that it hath not made a nullity of religion, Ezek. xiii. 10; that it hath not lost the apostolical constitution totally; that it holds truths sufficient to judge men christian by, the corruptions being taken away.

For first, What matters it, though Rome have not made a nullity, if it have made a falsity of religion, by most gross untruths, heresies, and idolatries, making void the commandments of God by men's traditions: and teaching for doctrines men's precepts? And secondly, What though the constitution be not totally lost? If an house, or material building be not totally demolished, but there still remain some few posts, or studs not yet pulled down, or some few stones of the foundation undug up, is it therefore truly an house, and so to be called? Lastly, Doth it follow, that, because Papists might be judged true Christians for the truths they hold, their corruptions being taken away, they are therefore such with their corruptions: so the vilest heretic, idolater, or other miscreant in the world, take away his heresy, idolatry, and mischief, may be judged a Christian: yea the devil himself, take but away his corruptions, is a glorious angel of light.

The Church of Rome not a True Church.

Having thus answered the reasons brought by Mr. B. to prove Rome a true church, and the like, I will in the next place lay down such arguments from the Scriptures, as manifest the contrary, and those also taken out of his own writings for the further discovering of his unsound and deceitful dealing with men, in the Lord's matters.

And first in his catechism printed 1602, page 14, he demands this question, Is the Church of Rome a true Church of Christ? whereunto he answereth, No, but of Antichrist the pope, the chief teacher of the doctrine of devils. And in the same place to prove that religion a false religion, he brings seven general reasons very weighty,

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all, and every one of them, as he that reads the place shall find.

Secondly, In his "Separatist's Schism," he makes as Jews, Turks, and Pagans, no matter, so Papists false matter of the church, and contrary to true matter, in that they join with Christ, their works in the cause of salvation, pages 111—113, 116.

Thirdly, He affirms in his last book page 277, that the covenant betwixt God and the people is the form of the church; and proves, that "this covenanting mutually doth give a being unto a people, to be God's people, Deut. xxix. 12, 13." To this, let that be added, which he writes, page 281 of the same book, namely that the Papists have not the same word, and "fundamental points of the covenant" with them in England. And, in particular, that they make "a covenant with angels, and saints, and so hold not the person in the covenant:" that they make another word "even men's traditions, the declaration of the covenant, and so change the evidence:" that "they make more sacraments, and so add counterfeit seals," turning the "Lord's Supper into a popish sacrifice," and "so do tear off the Lord's seal, and make it nothing worth:" and these three, namely the person, the writing, and the seals he makes the fundamental points of the covenant, as wherein the foundation thereof doth stand, page 280. And who now seeth not, how this man is first constrained to plead for Rome as a true church, to defend the Church of England, and afterwards being ashamed of that plea, to condemn it as a false church, corrupt, and counterfeit in the very foundation, and form, which gives the being, as he himself speaks?

Fourthly, He grants in these his "Plain Evidences," page 161, that Rome is Babylon, and that the Holy Ghost so calls it, and applies rightly the places, literally spoken of the type, the heathenish Babylon: spiritually to the thing signified, the antichristian Babylon, the Romish synagogue. And the same thing, the writings of the godly learned, both at home and abroad, do confirm. Now what can be more plain? Is it possible that Rome should be both Babylon, and Jerusalem? both the synagogue of Antichrist, and the Church of Christ? Can that catholic visible body, the Church of Rome, as it is called, under that visible head,

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Antichrist the pope, be the true visible body of Christ, under him the head? The apostle writing unto the Galatians, chap. iv. 26, calls the church of the new testament, "Jerusalem which is above, and the mother" of the faithful: and John in the book of the Revelation, chap. xiv. 8; xv. 2; xxi. 2, 3, opposeth unto Babylon spiritual, the new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven: and the tabernacle of God, where he dwelleth with men, making them his people, and himself their God. Now as the people of God in old time, were called out of Babylon civil, the place of their bodily bondage; and were to come to Jerusalem, and there to build anew the Lord's temple, or tabernacle, leaving Babylon to that destruction, which the Lord by his servants, the prophets, had denounced against it: Jer. l. 8—10, &c.; li. 6—9; Isa. xxi. 9; so are the people of God, now to go out of Babylon spiritual, to Jerusalem, Ezra i. 3, 5, &c.; and to build up themselves as lively stones into a spiritual house, or temple for the Lord to dwell in, leaving Babylon to that destruction and desolation, yea furthering the same, to which she is devoted by the Lord. Rev. xiv. 8; xviii. 2—8; xxi. 2, 3. But if the people of God should receive Mr. B.'s doctrine, they were not to come out of Babylon, nor to endeavour her destruction, but to tarry in her still, labouring for her reformation, and the reparation of her decayed places: neither were they to build any new spiritual temple, or to constitute any new church from Rome present, for of such a new constitution we speak, but there to abide, reproving her corruptions, and endeavouring the reformation of them. It is therefore untrue which you say, Mr. B., page 133, that the Romish church must be dealt with only as the church of God was in Judah: it must be dealt with as was Babylon, even abandoned and forsaken by the Lord's people, upon peril of the curses and plagues due unto it, and denounced against it, and against all that abide in it.

To this which Mr. B. in this place so greatly contends for, namely that Rome is the true church of Christ, though under corruptions, as Job was a true man under his sores, let that be added which he writeth elsewhere in this book, page 265, that corruptions are made matter of reproof, but no cause of separation from the church: and further pages

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110, 111, that they that separate from a true church, the body, cut off themselves from Christ, the head: and to these two a third grant and profession he makes, as that their "profession, and laws" in England "separate a Protestant from a Papist," page 114; that the Church of England is separated by profession, laws, and public meetings from Papists, page 129; that the very societies of Papists are to be left as no people of God, page 142; and his writings will appear to all men like a beggar's cloak patched together of old and new pieces, scraped up here and there, scarce two of the same either colour or thread. Let me a little stitch his patches together, and set them in some order.

They that separate from the true church, cut off themselves from Christ, pages 110, 111.

But the Church of England in separating from Rome, is separated from the true church, pages 114, 129, 142, with 131—133.

Therefore by Mr. Bernard's both grant and proof, the Church of England is separated from Christ.

And is this your piety, and thankfulness, Mr. B. towards your mother, for want of which you cast so many bitter curses upon the separatists? You are so far carried in honouring your grandmother Rome, as a true church, that you clean forget your mother England, and condemn her for a schismatical synagogue. Yea, well were it, or at the least more tolerable in you, if you thus dealt only with yourself, and your own, but this vile injury which you here offer, extends itself far and near, even to Luther, Zuinglius, and the other godly guides of separation, and to all the reformed churches separated from the Church of Rome, yea, to the martyrs in King Henry's and Queen Mary's days, and to all other the like godly-minded, through the whole world, whom you condemn as wicked schismatics and separated from Christ the head, in separating themselves from his body, your true Church of Rome.

Lastly, The Apostle Paul writing to the Church of Rome in her first, and best estate, premonisheth her to stand fast in the faith received, lest he which had not spared the natural branches, the Jewish church, but broken them off for unbelief, should not spare the wild branches, whereof

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she consisted. Rom. xi. 17, 20, 21. How then, Mr. B. can you deny, that Rome is, and hath been long, broken off, which so long hath joined works in the cause of salvation, which you yourself affirm to be against the true nature of faith in the Son of God, and that which destroyeth it?

And that all may take knowledge, how the Lord dealeth with his churches under the new testament, and may learn both to fear in themselves, and how to judge of the present state of Rome, let it be observed, what Christ Jesus, by his servant John, writeth unto the churches in Asia, especially to the Church of Ephesus: which he having blamed for leaving her first love, exhorts to repentance and to the doing of her first works, threatening withal, that otherwise he will come against her shortly, and remove her candlestick out of the place, except she amend. Rev. ii. 1, 4, 5, 12. 16, 18, 21, 22. The same thing, in effect, he denounceth against the churches of Pergamos, and Thyatira, and so against the rest, upon the like occasions. And if the Lord dealt so severely with the Church of Ephesus, notwithstanding the many excellent things which were found in her, and so acknowledged by the Lord himself, ver. 2, 3, as to remove her candlestick, 1st, to dischurch her, as chapter i. 20, for leaving her first love, and that speedily, except she repented, how can it be that the golden candlestick should still stand in Rome, and she remain the church of Christ, which so many hundred years since, hath left not only her first love, but her first faith also? changing her faith into heresy and idolatry, and her love into most bloody and cruel persecutions against all that have endeavoured her repentance, and so hath continued a long space, and doth continue at this day. None but professed Romanists will plead any charter for Rome above other churches. These things thus opened, and these two capital errors confuted, the former Jewish, namely, that England now is, as Judah was: and that as then, all the Jews in that nation, so now all the Englishmen in the king's dominions should constitute a national church: the latter popish, viz. that the Romish Church is the true visible body, or church of Christ; it is evident, both that the evangelical churches must be new planted, or constituted, by profession of faith; as the temple was new built, after the cap-

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tivity of Babylon; as also that not Josiah's sword, that is the co-active laws of men, but Paul's word, even the preaching or publishing of the gospel, is the proper means, which the Lord hath sanctified for that purpose: though, I doubt not, but there both hath been, and is, great use of the magistrate's authority for the furtherance of the gospel that way.

Moral Means only allowed by Christ.

When the Lord Jesus purposed to advance the sceptre of his kingdom, he sent out his apostles, not furnished with sword and spear, nor yet backed with human laws or authority, but with charge and commission to publish and declare his holy commandments, and the things which he had taught them, and thereby to make disciples, or gain subjects unto his kingdom, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20, which they also practised; admitting, and initiating men into the church upon their voluntary submission unto, and profession of the faith of Christ.

Now if unto this be added a second consideration, namely, where, and to whom the apostles were first to preach and to dispense this their commission received from Christ, it will both give light to the point in hand, and discover the vanity of a distinction in Mr. B.'s 2nd book, pages 245, 246, 262, to which he trusteth much, and therefore useth oft, for the gathering and establishing of churches after the popish apostacy, by fire and sword, without any further respect than the magistrate's authority: the sum whereof, as also of that he inferreth upon it, is, that to a church in the first plantation, that is, as he expounds himself, gathered of infidels, and of such a people as are no church, and no Christians, there is required preaching, and Paul's going before with the word, and profession of the name of Christ: but for a people that are not infidels, but Christians, how corrupt soever, and a church, no such preaching on the one side, nor profession of faith, on the other, is required: Josiah may compel with the fear of the sword, the magistrate's authority is sufficient in such a case. Let the reader behold this bold man's gross ignorance, and contradictions, and if he will not open his eyes to see them, he may feel them with his hand,

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so palpable are they. I will lay them down in these particulars.

First, He affirmeth, page 176, that the Lord takes a people to be his, before he commands them: and that commandments are for his people to rule them, and not to make them his people; as a man's commandment makes not a servant, but declares such a one to be his servant already: and so he gives God not more power to command the wicked, and unbelievers, than a man hath to command another man's servant: and yet here he tells us, that before a people can become a church, Paul must go with the Word: and expressly, page 277, that the Lord, to make men his people, gives them his Word, and quotes Matt. xxviii. 19, to prove it.

Secondly, By this his distinction, and his inferences upon it, he makes all the Jews to whom John Baptist, Christ, and the apostles preached, and which were baptized by them, or any of them, to have been infidels before, and no church, no Christians. And so he affirms directly, p. 262, (though I suppose he consider it not) where, in answer to a proposition of Mr. Smyth's that the churches of Christ were established of saints only, and men visibly faithful, confirmed amongst other scriptures, by Matt. iii. 6, he peremptorily avouches, and so builds upon it, that that proposition, and scripture, amongst the rest, is to be understood of a people which is no church, and no Christians: and so the church of the Jews at that time, Acts ii. 39; iii. 25; 1 Cor. x. 3, 4; Eph. iii. 6, must be no church, and they no Christians, with this man, for of them that scripture speaks, whatsoever Peter and Paul say to the contrary.

Thirdly, Since the apostles being sent by Christ to teach and make disciples, were to begin their ministration among the Jews in Jerusalem, Judea, and elsewhere; which is the consideration I formerly mentioned, and so by the publishing of the gospel of faith, on their part, and by the profession of faith, and confession of sins on the people's part, to gather and establish particular churches: Luke xxiv. 47; Acts ii. 1, 2, 5, 6, 14, 15; xiii. 5, 14, Acts ix. 11; Gal. i. 21; and that the church of the Jews was, at that time, the church of God, in respect of which, the establishing of these particular churches was no new plantation, but a

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continuation of their former ingrafting in the same root, wherein they formerly were planted, not differing from it essentially, but being only reformed, perfected, and otherwise ordered than before: it appeareth most untrue, which Mr. B. affirmeth, that the preaching of the gospel is only necessarily required for the planting of churches of such people, as were formerly infidels and no people of God.

Fourthly, and lastly, Even that which he most freely grants in one page (146) namely, that at the first, the Word must be preached, and by that means men brought to a voluntary profession without compulsion, that he utterly reverses, and denies in the very next (page 147,) where, pleading the proclamation of Hezekiah, and compulsion of Josiah, he annexeth to the same purpose as cunningly as his wit will serve, an insinuation, that Mordecai, for fear of whom, he saith, many of the heathen, for such the people were, became Jews, procured of the king proclamations, and other statutes, for the compelling of his subjects to the Jewish religion, Esther viii. 17; wherein he both perverts the words, as the reader may see, and the meaning also of the scripture; which is that the heathen observing the mighty and marvellous hand of God for his people, and against his and their enemies, many of them became Jews, and separated themselves unto them, from the filthiness of the heathen of the land, to seek the Lord God of Israel, Ezra vi. 21; as also in alleging to the same purpose, Luke xiv. 23, as he doth in another place: borrowing, as it seems, the corrupt exposition of that scripture from the ministers, whom he draws in with him, in his former book, page 183, of which more in due place.

Reformation in the English Church.

But that I may not be carried too far in this my digression, I do first deny, that the reformation by Queen Elizabeth, though great in itself and she for it, of blessed memory, did in any measure equalize the reformation made by Hezekiah, Josiah, and Nehemiah, in whom you most insist, Mr. Bernard. For whereas all reformation respects either persons or things, that which was wrought by these godly kings, and governors, receives testimony from the Holy Ghost himself, to have been most full, and entire,

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both ways. And to let pass, for brevity sake, the things themselves, with referring the reader to these and the like scriptures, which handle that part, 2 Kings xviii. 3—6; 2 Chron. xxix. 2, 3—21; xxx. 1—27; xxxi. 1—21; 2 Kings xxii. 3; xxiii. 1—8, 24, 25; I will insist a little upon the persons, about whom the question here is, between Mr. B. and me, in whom the other part of reformation is to be considered; which will better appear, if we compare together officers with officers, and people with people.

And first, It is evident in the Scriptures, that those kings and princes of Judah, did not appoint any other priests, either for the purging of the temple, or for any other priestly work, whether of reformation, or administration, than the Levites, whom the Lord had chosen to stand before him, to serve him, and to be his ministers, and to burn incense. 2 Chron. xxix. 4, 5, 11; xxxiv. 2—7, 33. And therefore when some that pretended they were Levites, could not "by searching, find the writing of their genealogy, they were put from the priesthood;" and for "the priests of the high places which had gone astray after idols" in the time of apostacy, "and served them, and caused the people to fall into iniquity," Ezra ii. 62, if they were not Levites, and called of God, but of Jeroboam's institution, they themselves were "sacrificed upon the altars," 2 Kings xxiii. 20, with which they had so provoked the Lord: and though they were Levites, and the anointed of the Lord, and so had their lives spared upon their repentance, yet were they deposed from their holy ministration, and "came not near unto the Lord," ver. 8, 9, any more, "nor unto any of his holy things in the most holy place, but were to bear their shame, and their abominations, which they had wrought." Ezek. xliv. 10, 13. But what answerable unto this can be brought forth in the reformation of the English Judah? wherein the priests of as ill an institution, or worse, than Jeroboam's, even the institution of Antichrist, were continued in the most solemn administrations: yea, both those which had been ordained and made in Queen Mary's days, for their breaden God, and those which had fallen back from that profession of the truth they made in King Edward's days, and caused the people to fall into iniquity: which makes the mischief much the greater,

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both they of the one kind and of the other, being for the most part, ignorant, profane, and popishly affected: as though either the sacrifice of the mass had been no idol, or that the Lord had laid no shame, or other burden upon such idolatrous apostates, and seducers.

Now for the people, entreating the reader to bear in mind what I have formerly manifested, as that neither the whole English nation ever was the Lord's true visible church, as the Jewish nation was, nor if it were, at the first, could so remain in the deep apostacy of Antichrist, I do add, that no man can by the Word of God affirm the same things in any measure of the people of England, in the beginning either of King Edward's or Queen Elizabeth's reign, which the Scriptures do of the people of the Jews in the time of Hezekiah, Josiah, Nehemiah, and other the like godly instruments of reformation.

First, For Hezekiah's time, it appeareth that after the Levites had sanctified themselves, and the house of the Lord, they offered, after all solemn manner, a sin-offering for the kingdom, and for the sanctuary, and for Judah: the king and the congregation laying their hands upon the sacrifices, thereby confessing that they were guilty of death, and deriving their guilt upon the goats in figure, but upon Christ in truth, whom they figured: and afterwards when the congregation was to bring sacrifices, and every one that was willing in heart, burnt-offerings, it is said the burnt-offerings were many, yea, so many, as the priests were not able to slay them all: and that all the people rejoiced, that God had made the people so ready. 2 Chron. xxix. 5—36. Add unto this that which is written, chap. xxx. 11, 12, that divers of Asher, Manasseh, and Zebulun did submit themselves unto the counsel of Hezekiah, and that willingly, for he had no authority over them at all, and came to Jerusalem, of whom the Lord also testifieth, that they prepared their whole heart to seek the Lord God, ver. 18, 19, &c. and for Judah, that the hand of God was with them, so that he gave them one heart to do the commandment of the king, and of the rulers, according to the word of the Lord: and, lastly, that the whole assembly kept the passover with joy, ver. 25, 27, and that all the congregation, both strangers and those

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that dwelt in Judah rejoiced with the priests and Levites, who also blessing them, had their voice heard in heaven, and their prayer in the Lord's holy habitation.

And for Josiah's time, it is written, that he, the priests, and all the people from the greatest to the smallest, went up into the house of the Lord, and that he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant, and that he stood by his pillar, and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, &c., and caused, or appointed, for the word signifieth no more, all that were found in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand unto it; and that the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 30—32.

Thirdly, For the estate of the people in Nehemiah's time, with whom also, I join Ezra in the work of reformation, first, it appeareth, that none were constrained to return to Jerusalem for the building of the Lord's house; but such amongst the people, as would, and with whom their God was, were by the proclamation of Cyrus to return; and secondly, That Ezra, and such as went with him did, before their journey, humble themselves by fasting before the Lord, for direction, Ezra i. 1, 3; viii. 21; ix. 1—3; x. 1—19; and that, when they were come to Jerusalem, there was much weeping and wailing by him for the sins of the people, especially for that great trespass they had committed, in taking strange wives of the people of the land, together with great manifestation, and practice of repentance, by all the congregation: and afterwards in the book of Nehemiah, viii. 1—17, when all the people were assembled together in the very street, the same Ezra, and the Levites with him, read and expounded the law unto them, to the great humbling of all the people at the first, and afterwards to the great rejoicing of them all, when they understood the words which were taught them: and thus they practised every day, even from the first day unto the last, all the seven days, whilst the feast lasted: and in the last place, and for the shutting up of all, confessing their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers, with fasting, sackcloth, and earth upon them, they

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made a sure covenant, and wrote it, sealed it, and swore unto it, the princes, Levites, priests, and people all that were separated from the people of the land, unto the law of God, their wives, sons, and daughters, all that could understand, the chief for the rest, that they would walk in God's law, which was given by Moses the servant of God, to observe and do all the commandments of God, and his judgments, and statutes. Chap. ix. 1, 2; x. 1, 28, 29.

Unto these former scriptures I will annex one other of the same nature with them, and respecting the case of reformation. It is recorded, therefore, of Asa a godly king of Judah, having in the beginning of his reign, abolished idolatry, and the monuments of it, and commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers, &c., that afterwards upon the exhortation of the prophets Azariah, and Oded, he not only went on with that work, but assembled together all Judah, and Benjamin, and the strangers which had fallen to him out of Israel, when they saw the Lord his God was him, and that they made a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers, with all their heart, and with all their soul: and that whosoever would not seek the Lord God of Israel, should be slain, whether he were small or great, man or woman; and the same covenant with the Lord being confirmed by an oath, it is said, that "all Judah rejoiced at the oath," and the reason is added, "for they had sworn unto the Lord with all their heart, and sought him with a whole desire, and he was found of them." 2 Chron. xiv. 2—4; xv. 8, 9, 12, 13, 15. The Lord, as he had chosen this whole kingdom to be his people, and raised up this, and the like notable instruments of reformation amongst them, so did he upon this and the like occasions work a most wonderful and extraordinary work upon them, bowing their hearts universally to the love of his Word, for the present, and to the receiving of the same with joy, together with all readiness unto the obedience of his commandments: the like unto which never was, nor shall be seen, to the end of the world in a whole kingdom, except the Lord do again choose one nation from all other nations to be his people, as then he did. And I am verily persuaded, that Mr. B., how bold soever he be in his affirmations, will not say the like of

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all England, either in the beginning or end of King Edward's or Queen Elizabeth's reign, which the Scriptures themselves here, and elsewhere, do testify, of all Judah: whether we respect the disposition of the people whose hearts universally the Lord on his part did thus affect; or the solemn covenant, which they on theirs, did contract, or rather renew with him.

And here I do further also infer, since all Judah rejoiced at the oath of the covenant, and swore unto the Lord with all their heart, and sought him with a whole desire, 2 Chron. xv. 13, and that the hand of God was in Judah, so that he gave them one heart to do the commandment of the king and of the rulers, according to the word of the Lord, 2 Chron. xxx. 12, and so at other times, that it is most untruly affirmed by Mr. B. how oft soever he repeat it, that the reformation of Judah was not voluntary, but of compulsion, and of fear. True it is, that the kings of Judah made compulsive laws for the reformation of the people, or rather for their continuance in that reformation, to which they had voluntarily submitted; but as Mr. B.'s ignorance is intolerable, in that his seditious error, tending indeed to the disturbance and subversion of all states civil and ecclesiastical, that voluntariness is taken away by being under any government: that to be subject and ruled is an estate far from freedom: and that Christians lose thereby Christian liberty, page 212: so should he here have observed a difference betwixt compulsion active and passive, as they speak: or more plainly thus, that it is one thing for kings, or men in authority, to require of their subjects the performance of necessary duties or the forbearance of the contrary, upon such and such penalties, and another thing for their subjects to obey them herein, for fear, and involuntarily. Many of the king's laws do require loyalty of all his subjects towards his majesty, and do forbid, upon pain of death, all treasons and rebellions: now will any man hereupon be so unadvised, as to affirm, that therefore all the king's subjects do forbear treasons and rebellions, through compulsion, and fear, and unwillingly? That godly magistrates are by compulsion to repress public and notable idolatry, as also to provide that the truth of God in his ordinance be taught, and published in their

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dominions, I make no doubt; it may be also, it is not unlawful for them by some penalty, or other, to provoke their subjects universally unto hearing for their instruction, and conversion; yea, to grant they may inflict the same upon them, if after due teaching, they offer not themselves unto the church; but that any king now upon earth is by the Word of God, to draw all the people of his nation into covenant with the Lord, how much less before they be conveniently taught, and to confirm the same by oath, and to inflict death upon all that refuse it, or remain wicked, and unrepentant, as the kings of Judah were to do by the people of that nation, can never be proved by Mr. B. or any other man, how often soever they bring in their practices for precedents. And if the kings of England should hold it their duty, as the kings of Israel held it theirs, to destroy all the wicked of the land, and to slay all that would not seek the Lord God of Israel with all their heart, and with all their soul, whether great, or small, man or woman, Psa. ci. 3; 2 Chron. xv. 12, 13, and should practise accordingly, they would be left barer of subjects, than I hope they shall be.

To these considerations let this be added, that when David the most famous king of Israel had subdued the nations round about him, and made them tributaries, and reigned over them, 2 Sam. v. 1—3, 5, he did not force them into the church by compulsive laws, nor take any such violent courses, that we read of. Neither can you shift off the matter, Mr. B., by alleging that these nations were heathens, and infidels, and such as made no profession of religion, nor were circumcised: for amongst the rest over whom David ruled, the Edomites, ver. 14, are named, which were the posterity of holy Abraham, as well as the Israelites, coming of Esau, as they of Jacob: who did also, besides many main truths, retain circumcision, and that true also, as well as the Papists retain true baptism; and by which they might as truly be deemed the Lord's people, though in apostacy, as the Papists by the other.

To end this argument of violence in religion, to which it is very unnatural; neither Hezekiah, nor Josiah, nor any other king, either of Judah or England, had or hath power from God, to compel an apparent profane person,

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so remaining, either to join unto, or continue in the church, and the church so to receive, and continue him. The kings of Judah, as I have showed, were to destroy and put to death all such wicked ones, and so to weed them out of the church, by the sword, according to the dispensation of those times, to what end then doth Mr. B. bring in them, and their authority, either for the planting or watering of such persons in the church, for which purpose notwithstanding he produceth them? So for other kings, though they be not to destroy all the wicked in their land, or nation, as not being to gather a national church, so are they to use their authority for the preserving of the church pure, and to see that wicked and flagitious persons be neither taken into, nor kept in the church to the dishonour of God, and profanation of his ordinances.

You speak much of the reformation of your church after Popery. There was indeed a great reformation of things in your church, but very little, of the church, to speak truly and properly. The people, as I have said, are the church: and to make a reformed church, there must be first a reformed people: and so there should have been with you by the preaching of repentance ftom dead works, and faith in Christ: that the people, as the Lord should have vouchsafed grace, being first fitted for, and made capable of the sacraments, and other ordinances, might afterwards have communicated in the pure use of them: for want of which, instead of a pure use, there hath been, and is at this day a most profane abuse of them, to the great dishonour of Christ, and his gospel, and to the hardening of thousands in their impenitence. Others also endeavouring yet a further reformation, have sued, and do sue to kings, and queens, and parliaments, for the rooting out of the prelacy, and with it, of such other evil fruits as grow from that bitter root: and on the contrary to have the ministry, government, and discipline of Christ set over the parishes, as they stand: the first fruit of which reformation, if it were obtained, would be the further profanation of the more of God's ordinances upon such, as to whom they appertained not, and so the further provocation of his great Majesty unto anger and indignation against all such as so practised or consented thereunto. Is it not

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strange that men in the reforming of a church, should almost or altogether forget the church, which is the people, or that they should labour to crown Christ a king over a people, whose prophet he hath not first been? or to set him to rule by his laws, and officers, over the professed subjects of Antichrist, and the devil? or is it possible that ever they should submit to the discipline of Christ, which have not first been prepared, in some measure, by his holy doctrine, and taught with meekness to stoop unto his yoke?

Both you Mr. B. and they of the other sort do tell us oft of the reformed churches, and of your agreement with them. I wish to God, from my very heart, that both you and they would compare yourselves with them, in this principal point, unto which all other are but as accessories. They after the abolition of Popery, were established at the first, whether by a new plantation, new, we mean in respect of the present estate of Rome, or by reformation only, as you will have it: and are still continued and increased by the free, voluntary, and personal profession of faith, and confession of sins of such men, and women, as are by the Word of God, and the publishing of it, persuaded, and in some measure fore-fitted to join unto them, and walk with them: and all this without any compulsion with the fear of Josiah's sword, or Hezekiah's proclamation, by which you confess, (pages 246, 247,) your church to have been, in the persons of King Edward and Queen Elizabeth, brought back from Antichrist to the Reformation wherein now you stand: for which you peremptorily profess, there is not required any profession of the name of Christ.

Let it then be considered of, and judged by all indifferent men, how it can possibly be that both the reformed churches abroad, and the unreformed Church of England, can be truly gathered, after the apostacy of Antichrist: the former being separated from Popery into covenant with the Lord, in the particular members, by voluntary profession of faith without compulsion; and the latter by compulsion, without profession of faith. Howsoever government, and freedom, or voluntariness, be not contrary, according to your most ignorant affirmation; yet compulsion and voluntariness are; and contraries cannot stand

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together and be made true, no not by God himself. My hope was that, the argument of compulsion once ended, I might, with good leave, have returned to the former book: but see, after so many provings and professings of Rome a true church, and still in covenant with God, and that the churches now separating from her, were not to be gathered of such voluntaries, as in the first plantation, nor needed the preaching of the Word to go before for their conversion, but that the magistrate might compel them by fear, and that so the reformation of the Church of England was wrought, Mr. B. now tells us a clean contrary tale, page 145, and that their reformation was voluntary, and not constrained, and how that came about.

Was the Reformation under Elizabeth voluntary?

First, (to let pass the succession of the church he pleads from King Ethelred, King of Kent, of which I have spoken so lately, as the reader may bear mine answer in mind) that the Queen's Majesty with many others, began a voluntary reformation, and that the supreme power, as he calls it, being gathered, made proclamation of her godly intent, which was a kind of teaching to which the people yielded voluntarily, for anything that any man can say to the contrary: and (page 245,) adjoined themselves unto them, and that the act of the chief doing it voluntarily, is to be accounted the act of all, though the inferiors come not to consent, for proof of which he quoteth three scriptures, Exod. xix. 3, 7, 8; Josh. iv. 2, 8; 2 Chron. xiv. 2.

A solid proof; because the queen did voluntarily embrace the truth in a measure, therefore the whole body of the land, whom she urged by proclamation, and other enforcements, did voluntarily profess, and embrace the same. For touching the supreme power gathered, that is, the council and nobles, when she came to the crown they were such as had immediately before both enacted and executed most bloody statutes against such as voluntarily professed the truth, and where you, and the ministers* with you, page 187, affirm that the body of the land did in Queen Elizabeth's time, adjoin themselves unto that company which had stood out in Queen Mary's days, it is

* "The Minister's Positions Examined."

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clean otherwise, for they that so stood out adjoined themselves to the rest in the several parishes, where their houses stood, and occasions lay, under the, formerly, mass-priests, and then, for the most part, ignorant and profane priests, with their English reformed mass-book.

In adding further, that the queen's proclamation was a kind of teaching, you trifle notably: the question is of such a teaching, as was, effectually, to make a whole nation of Antichristians the week before, true Christians, and a true church. It was indeed the only effectual means the people had generally: and if the queen had proclaimed the contrary the next week, it would have been as effectual to have turned them to their former vomit again. Your presumption, that no man can say to the contrary, but that the people yielded voluntarily to the truth, upon the queen's proclamation, is vain, considering what the voluntary yielding, 2 Cor. ix. 13, or submission unto the gospel of Christ is, which the Scriptures commend unto us, in the establishing of churches.

The gospel is a supernatural thing, and cannot possibly be yielded unto voluntarily by a natural man, or persuaded but by a supernatural motive, which is only itself: and that by the operation of the Spirit also in some measure, it cannot be understood and believed but by itself published, and proclaimed, as the sun is seen by its own light, much less can it be willed, and willingly yielded unto: for the will must follow the understanding; neither can any man will that he knows not. Besides the many treasons and great rebellions raised to re-establish Popery in the land, the great good liking of the old law, as they term it, which still is found in the multitude, and the apparent hatred and persecution against the true profession of the gospel in any measure, though there be ten now for one in the beginning of the queen's reign that have attained to some measure of knowledge and conscience of godliness, do confirm that which I say, viz.: that the yielding unto the gospel in the multitude, could not be voluntary. The three scriptures you bring to show, that the agreement of the chief is accounted in the case of faith and religion the act of all, though the inferiors give not their consent, is by you egregiously perverted; for

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they do all and every one of them plainly prove the people's consent. The first is Exod. xix. 3, 7, 8, where, ver. 3, the Lord signifies his will unto Moses, and ver. 7, Moses propounds the same things unto the elders, and ver. 8, all the people, viz. having the same things by the elders propounded to them, as Junius upon that place, (and so will any man of common sense,) noteth, promise obedience to all the Lord's commandments. The second place is Josh. iv. 2, 8, where it is evident to him that reads the scripture quoted with it, that which is written, chap. iii. 9, and Deut. xxvii. 1—3, &c., that the twelve men that took the twelve stones out of the midst of Jordan, for a memorial of the people's safe passing over, did it with the distinct knowledge and actual consent of the multitude, and of all the people, as is said, ver. 1, who are also expressly commanded by Joshua, ver. 2 of the same chapter, and ver. 12 of the chapter before-going, to choose or take these twelve men for the purpose before named. Lastly. For 2 Chron. xiv. 7, as it is true, that Asa the king did provoke the rest to seek the Lord, both by his example and authority, so is it as true, that the people sought the Lord their God with him, and as untrue that any did by his power, obey, in fear, as you affirm. The Lord himself testifies expressly against you, "and that all Judah and Benjamin assembled in Jerusalem, and made a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart, and with all their soul;" of whom also it is witnessed accordingly, that "they swore unto the Lord with all their heart, and sought him with a whole desire," 2 Chron. xv. 9, 10, 12, 15. And for the point itself, howsoever in bodily things, the people may refer themselves to the determinations of their superiors, and may bind themselves to rest in them, as in their own acts, though they neither take knowledge of, nor give consent unto the things in particular, yea though they be to their bodily damage: yet in the matters of faith and religion, it is clean otherwise, and to hold the same proportion is a very popish error, which makes the governors, lords over the people's faith.

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May the Church include the Ungodly?

And thus, at the last, am I got back whence I digressed, and will now proceed in the examination of such reasons, as Mr. B. brings to prove that profane persons, or to use his own words, men of lewd conversation, are not false matter of the church. To which purpose, he first distinguisheth true matter into good and bad; and so taking that which is bad and naught unto himself, for the matter of his church, he will yet have it true, and no false matter. And this distinction of his, he labours to exemplify by similitude, and to confirm by example. The similitude he borrows from a material house, and the matter of it, timber and stone, which makes either nothing to the matter in hand, or if anything, against himself. If there can possibly be any false matter of an house, then rotten timber is false matter: and so wicked and unrepentant sinners dead, and rotting in the grave of sin, are false matter in proportion: but if there can be no false matter of a material house, then he may see how maimed his comparison is, when the terms of the one side are impossible. Howsoever it is evident, that the house of God, the church, is a spiritual house made of lively stones, built upon that life-giving foundation, Christ Jesus. 1 Pet. ii. 5; 1 Cor. xv. 45; Eph. ii. 20. And as a man, or other living creature, being once become dead naturally, cannot be called a true man naturally, so neither can a man spiritually dead in trespasses and sins, be called a true man spiritually, and therefore not true matter of that spiritual house, the church.

The things you further add, namely, that all churches have in them good and bad matter, that men deserving justly to be cast out, are not false matter, nor so cast out of the church, but as bad matter, but true: that excommunicates are still brethren by their profession; are all of them so many devices of your own without proof, or truth, page 114.

For first, It is not true, that all churches, which you take for such, have in them good matter: for there may be by your own grant, true churches by their profession, consisting only of wicked persons, which you acknowledge

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bad matter, though true: and there are full many parish churches in England, wherein, he that should be put to find any good matter, yea, one holy and sanctified man, had need with the cynic philosopher, seek it, or him, with a candle at noon-day; neither is it true on the other side, that all churches have in them bad matter: there are churches in the world, wherein, by the mercy of God, and power of his ordinances, there is no visible bad matter, that is, no person of known lewd conversation: else, God forbid! you wrong the churches of Christ, and deceive the Christian reader, where in the shutting up of this point, you persuade him* that he shall find ever cause thus to be affected, and to grieve, viz. at lewd persons in the church, wheresoever he comes. He may, and ought to come, where there is no such cause of grief, nor, by the grace of our God assisting us, shall be, without reformation; though you measure others by your own line.

Now for the second point, nothing can be more untruly affirmed, than that the church may cast out any part or parcel of her true matter. For first, all the true matter of the church hath upon it the form of the church, and so is of the essence and being of the church, which for the church to cast out, were to destroy her own essence and being. Secondly, The true matter of the church, and true members of Christ, are the same. As Christ is called the foundation of the house, 1 Cor. iii. 11, they of the church, are the matter of the building: as he is called the head of his body, Eph. i. 22, 23, they are his members: whom to excommunicate, is to deliver unto Satan, 1 Cor. v. 5, whereupon I do necessarily infer, that if to excommunicate be to deliver to Satan, and that the church may lawfully excommunicate wicked persons, and that wicked persons be true matter, and that true matter be true members of Christ's body, then may the church lawfully deliver to Satan the true members of Christ's body, which I abhor to write. And though your ordinaries, Mr. B., be ofttimes so liberal of the true members of Christ, as thus to deliver them to the devil, yet had the ministers of Christ rather have their own members torn from their bodies, than thus to dismember the blessed body of the Lord Jesus.

* "Christian Advertisements," p. 116.

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The heinousness of this fact shows the vanity of your distinction, the error of your opinion, and the falsity of your church.

Lastly, You do mistake the two scriptures, which you bring to prove, that a man justly excommunicate is still called a brother, in the scriptures, and so to be held by the church.

The apostle in the former place, 2 Thess. iii. 15, speaks not of a man excommunicated, nor worthy to be excommunicated neither: but of such a person, as follows not his calling faithfully as he ought, but, being negligent in his own, is too busy in other men's matters; whom he wills the brethren to mark, and no way to countenance in such walking, but on the contrary to show their dislike of it, that he may see it, and be ashamed of it; and this, he that reads over the chapter, shall observe, I suppose, to be the apostle's meaning. In the second place, which is 1 Cor. v. 11, his meaning is, not, that Christians becoming fornicators, covetous, idolaters, and so continuing obstinate, should still be reputed brethren notwithstanding, but he speaks of a brother there, as Ezekiel speaks of a righteous man, chap. xviii. 24, that turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and doth according to all the abomination of the wicked, &c., and as truly may it be affirmed, that the person Ezekiel speaks of, is still to be reputed a righteous man, as that he, of whom Paul speaks, is still to be accounted a brother. Both the prophet and apostle speak of such persons, as were righteous, and brethren reputatively, before they did so bastardly degenerate. And is it possible, that Christ should charge his church to account an obstinate offender, as an heathen and publican, Matt. xviii. and that Paul should come after, and direct them to account him a brother? Besides Matt. xxiii. 8, all the members of the church are brethren: and to become a member is to become a brother, and so to be excommunicated out of the church is nothing else but to be cast out of the church's brotherhood. Lastly, the apostle, 1 Cor. v. 11, names idolaters amongst the rest; and will you have idolaters your brethren, Mr. B.? why then did you in the former page exclude papists, and page 108, idolaters universally? A holy brotherhood it seems you will have, brother idolater, heretic, and what not!

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The instance you bring of Simon Magus, an hypocrite, received by the apostle, by the Evangelist you should say, Acts viii. makes strongly against you, if it be well considered what is written of him. For after he was discovered by Peter not to have his heart right in the sight of God, he was pronounced by him to have neither part nor fellowship in that business, ver. 21. Now if Philip had discerned thus much by him, at the first, do you think he would have acknowledged him for a partner in it? or have given the seal of the forgiveness of sins, of new birth, and of salvation, as you truly prove baptism to be, page 119, to such a blank? nay would he have profaned the Lord's holy things upon such a dog or swine, contrary to the express commandment of Christ, Matt. vii. 6? Cease, Mr. B. to excuse yourself by accusing the holy apostles and evangelists of Christ.

And hereupon I do thus argue.

They that have no right to the holy things of God in the church are not to be admitted into it, neither is the church gathered of such persons, rightly, and truly gathered.

But men of lewd conversation have no right to the holy things of God in the church; and therefore the church gathered of such persons, is not truly gathered.

The former proposition is clear, because men admitted into the church, are admitted to the participation, and communion of the holy things of God in the church. The second also appeareth, both by the scripture before named, where Peter pronounceth, that such as have not their heart right with God, which no lewd persons have or ever had, have no part in the holy things of God, as also by Mr. Bernard's own grant, namely, that wicked persons are to be cast out of the church. And what could there be in the world more ridiculous, yea or wherein God were more plainly mocked, than to gather a church of such persons, as are judged fit to be cast out of the church? And yet for this church-gathering, being indeed his own, Mr. B. pleads both here, and everywhere, both in this, and his other book.

Analogies.

In the next place come in certain popular similitudes, to colour over that rotten error, which can by no reason, or scripture, be made sound, in number, three, which I will consider in order.

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"Two persons are lawfully married by public profession and mutual consent: now though the wife perform not her covenant, but prove unfaithful, yet is she still a true wife, till the bill of divorcement be given out," page 115.

I grant it: but see you not, how you take the thing for granted, which we deny, namely, that your national church is the true wife of Christ? Since he divorced his ancient wife, the nation of the Jews, he never married, nor will marry, nation more: much less, which is more specially to be considered, did he ever marry for his lawful wife the profane multitudes of unhallowed atheists wherewith, as you confess in the beginning of your book, your church aboundeth. Hath Christ commanded his people not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers, 2 Cor. vi. 14? and will he yoke himself with them, and with atheists, and other wicked persons? which are indeed infidels, and unbelievers, 1 Tim. v. 8; Tit. i. 15; James ii. 17, 20, whatsoever they profess in word, though you in your second book Mr. B. do with defiance avouch the contrary.

The same apostle in another place affirmeth that, he which coupleth himself with an harlot, is one body with her, 1 Cor. vi. 15, 16: and forbids the faithful, as a most impious thing, to make the members of Christ, the members of an harlot: and will Christ make himself the head of harlots, thieves, murderers, blasphemers, and the like? or become one body with them, he the head, and they the members, as it is betwixt him, and his church, 1 Cor. x. 17; xii. 12, 27? Lastly, No woman having a former husband alive, may take a second, or be lawfully married unto him; but wicked and profane persons have a former husband yet living, even the law, or sin taking occasion by the law, to work in them all manner of lust, and ruling over them as the husband over the wife, to which also they are bound, as the wife unto the husband: Rom. vii. 1—3, 5, 8, and therefore cannot be married unto Christ, nor become his wife.

The second similitude followeth.

"A man professing obedience to a king as his alone sovereign, and obeying his laws in the general, though he transgress in some things openly, and greatly, is that king's true subject notwithstanding."

You deal unfaithfully, and put the case wrong. The question is of a man professing himself in word the king's

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loyal subject, and his alone, but in deed, and truth, the sworn slave of his professed enemy, and an apparent rebel against the king's majesty. And whether such a one be a true subject unto the king or no: for such, and no better, are wicked, and profane men, whatsoever in word they possess, even slaves and vassals of the devil, and rank rebels against the Lord Jesus. Right now you would have Rome a true church, and now you will have Jesuits the king's true subjects: for such they profess themselves, as boldly, as falsely. And yet no Romish priest or Jesuit is more treacherous to the king's person, and state, than is a profane ungodly man, professing Christianity, to the crown and dignity of Christ Jesus.

The third resemblance is of "a man professing one only trade, though bunglingly, or carelessly, whom none will call a false tradesman, but either no good tradesman, or unprofitable, yet truly that tradesman by his profession."

Here, as before, you misput the case; you should instance in a man professing a trade or faculty, but practising the contrary in his general course. For example, a man professeth himself in word a surgeon, or physician, but is observed, and found in deed and practice, to poison men, and cut their throats, and this to be his resolved course. Now so charitable is Mr. B. as he will have this man still called, and that truly, a physician, or surgeon, though not good, nor profitable. But the truth is, he is a false and treacherous homicide, and murderer, and so to be abhorred of all, but of none either to be called or accounted a true physician, or surgeon, either good or evil. Such a one, and no better is he to his own soul, that under the profession of Christianity in word, practiseth wickedness, and impiety, and hath his conversation in them.

The author, having thus ended his defence for the bad and naughty matter of his church, so granted by him, in effect, comes to speak of false matter; but so briefly, and darkly withal, as it appears plainly, he is loth to meddle with it, lest in the handling, his bad matter should prove false matter, as it comes to pass with counterfeit coin. That he saith then is, that false matter is contrary to this true matter, that is to the true matter of which he hath spoken. Whereupon it followeth, that since the true matter, he hath

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spoken of, is wicked and ungodly men, though professing Christ, and that holy and godly men are contrary to men wicked and ungodly, that therefore godly and holy men are contrary to the true matter of his church, and so by his reckoning, false matter. To conclude this point. What is false, but that which hath an appearance of truth, but not the truth itself, whereof it makes show? in which respect the Scriptures also speak of false Christs, false prophets, false apostles, false brethren, false witnesses, false balances, and the like; pretending themselves to be that which they are not, and to have that truth in them, which they have not: of all which there is none more truly false, nor more fitly so called, than that man is, and is called, truly, a false Christian, or false matter of the church, which professeth in words he looks to be saved by Jesus Christ, and yet continues in a lewd and wicked conversation, having a show of godliness, but denying the power thereof, 2 Tim. iii. 5, and, professing the knowledge of God, but by works denying him. Tit. i. 16. Whereupon I do also conclude, that the body of the Church of England being gathered generally, and for the most part of such members visibly, cannot be the true visible body of Christ, except a true living body can be compacted of false and dead members.

The Visible Form of the Church.

That which comes next into consideration, in Mr. B.'s order, is the visible form of the church, as he calls it, which he makes, and truly, the uniting of us unto God, and one to another visibly, and in his second book, page 277, the covenant, by which God sets up a people to be his people, and they him mutually to be their God. This description he illustrateth by a similitude borrowed from a material building, whose form ariseth from the coupling together of the stones upon the foundation, which he also further manifesteth, by comparing it with the form of the invisible church, by which the faithful are united to God, through Christ invisibly, and one unto another. Of the terms of which comparison, and their proportion, we shall speak by and by. I do only in the meanwhile entreat the reader to observe with me these two things. The former that, Mr. B., having in the beginning of his book censured us

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very severely, and that with Dr. Allison's concurring testimony, for misapplying 1 Pet. ii. 5, to the visible church, which, said they, was meant of the invisible church, here notwithstanding he interprets it of the visible church even as we do. The latter, that speaking of the invisible church, and the form of it, he brings in sundry scriptures, as so to be expounded, which are apparently intended of the visible church; and amongst the rest these three, Eph. ii. 22; iv. 4; 1 Cor. xii. 13: the last of which he himself also, within a few pages following, expounds as meant of the visible church, and the properties thereof, page 115. Now for the comparison betwixt the form of the invisible, and visible church: wherein if Mr. B. observed due proportion, and made the form of the visible church the same visibly, externally, and in respect of men, which he doth the form of the invisible church, invisibly, internally, and in respect of God, and so laid down things in simple and plain terms, the truth in the point would easily appear, and much needless labour be spared on both sides. The form of the invisible church he noteth, first, and on God's part to be raised, by the Spirit, by which invisible hand, God taketh men immediately by the heart, and saith he will be their God. Secondly, and on man's part, by faith, by which invisible hand the believers do take hold of the promise of the Spirit, believing that they are his people, and he their God: and that thus God and man are invisibly united. And thirdly, by love, by which men take hold one of another, and so are united together invisibly. And all this he confirms sufficiently by the Scriptures. Answerable unto which three invisible hands for this invisible union, he makes three visible hands for the visible union: first, unto the Spirit, the Word: second, unto faith, the profession of faith; third, unto love, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper: for so he proportioneth them. The colour of truth, which these things may seem to have in their mutual reference, will rub off in the very touching of the particulars. But if Mr. B. would have observed just proportion, and have set things down plainly, he should have said thus, or to this effect: As the invisible, internal, and effectual union of God with man, of man with God, and of one man with another is raised from the invisible, internal, and effectual work of the Spirit, invisible, internal, and effectual faith, and love,

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which are only seen, and known of God, and of the parties themselves, in whom they are; so must the visible, external, and apparent union of God with man, of man with God, and of one man with another, arise from the visible, external, and apparent work of the Spirit: visible, external, and apparent faith and love, which are seen of men, and made sensible to the eye of charity, which judgeth, probably, of things which are not seen, by the things which are seen. For albeit, it be true, which Mr. B. hath in his second book, page 136, that we are not therefore a church of God, because men so judge us, but because God hath received us into covenant with himself; yet it must also be considered that the church is not called visible in respect of God, but of men, to whom it doth, or may appear, and by whom it is so discerned, and judged probably.

Paul and James on Justification.

The Scriptures do speak of a "justification" before God, which is "by faith alone;" Rom. iii. iv.; and of "a justification" before men, which is "by works:" James ii.: the former of which we may truly call invisible justification, as known to none but God, and the conscience of the party justified: the other visible justification, as being manifest, and made visible unto men, by works, as ver. 18 of the chapter before named, where the apostle speaketh of showing, manifesting, or making visible faith, and so consequently, justification, by works. And look what is here said of visible, and invisible faith, and justification, the same from other scriptures compared together may be affirmed of visible, and invisible election, redemption, sanctification; as also of visible, and invisible saints for the matter; and of the visible and invisible union for the form of the visible, and invisible church: the invisible being certain, infallible, and so known to be, of God: the visible, moral, probable, and so appearing unto men. There is indeed, and in the right disposition of things by the revealed will of God, but "one Church of Christ, which is his body, whereof he is the head, and which he hath purchased with his blood:" Cant. vi. 8; Eph. iv. 4; i. 22, 23; Acts xx. 28: for Christ hath not purchased two churches with his blood, but one; neither is he the head

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of two bodies, but of one: and according to this purchase of Christ, and ordinance of God, all that are of the visible church are also of the invisible, and all of the invisible of the visible church, which are indeed not two, but one church, in two sundry respects, as I have formerly showed. I deny not, but that, as it hath been said of old, there are "many sheep without, and many wolves within:" many of the visible church, which are not of the invisible church, and so answerably, many of the invisible church, which never come into the visible church. But this, say I, is not according to the revealed will of God, in his Word; but by man's default, and sin. It is their sin of ignorance or infirmity, which being of the invisible church, do not, if possibly they can, join themselves unto the visible church, there to partake in the visible ordinances: it is their sin of hypocrisy, and presumption, which not being of the invisible church, do adjoin themselves to the visible church, there to profane the Lord's covenant and ordinances, to which they have no right. For how can they, being wicked and unholy, challenge the Lord to be their God, that is, all happiness, and goodness, unto them, which is one part of the covenant, or profess themselves to be his people, which is another part? when the devil is their God, and their lusts; and they his and their people, and servants, to whom they obey? or what have they to do to meddle with God's covenant, whom he expressly forbids to take it in their mouths? It is therefore a vile and profane defence, which you are driven to, Mr. B., by pleading, that wicked persons are true matter of the church, and so admitted into covenant with God, in the second book, page 279; that "obedience only follows the covenant as the fruit of it:" and that God requires not actual obedience, or that we should be actually good, or holy, before, or when we covenant with him: but that he should make us good; and that we should be good, and perform actual obedience afterward; which as it is notable Anabaptistry, and indeed the ground of that heresy being applied to the covenant of the Jewish church: so being applied to the covenant of the church now, it is worse than Anabaptistry. And consider this man, he makes the sacrament of the Lord's Supper a ground and part of the covenant,

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and yet affirms, that God for men's entering into this covenant, requires not that they should be holy, and good: and so by this deep divinity, it must needs follow, that the Lord requires not that men should be good, or holy for their partaking in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

Marks of Union.

The particulars now follow, in which you place this visible union, and covenant of the Lord with his people, of them with him, and of them one with another. The first whereof is his Word, which, say you, is the only first visible note, and testimony from God, by which he makes a people, his people. Psa. cxlvii. 19; Rom. iii. 1, 2; John xvii. 6; and so you go on to prove, that this Word is God's outstretched hand to subdue people unto him: the sword of the Spirit by which he smiteth; the immortal seed, by which he begetteth, and maketh alive; the Word of reconciliation, by which he reconcileth his church, and people. And thereupon you conclude, "That to whomsoever God sends his Word, to them he testifieth his love, and desire to make them his church and people." page 118.

To let pass the repugnancy in your words, as first, where you speak of the only first note, as though there could possibly be more firsts than one: and 2. Where you make the Word, a note and testimony, by which God makes a people, his people: whereas notes and testimonies do not make that to be, which is not, but do show and declare it to be already, I do answer, that as it is true, that where God sends his Word, there he testifieth his love; and is desirous, that is, in respect of the outward offer of the means, to make such a people his church; so is it most untrue, that to whomsoever God sends his Word, and testifies his desire outwardly to make them his people, and church, that those he makes his church and people, or unites himself visibly unto them. The uniting of God unto men is an effect of the Word, which it hath not always upon them to whom it is sent. External efficients do never prove and argue their effects necessarily, except they work naturally, and infallibly also, which the Word doth not, but morally, and according to the good pleasure, and blessing of the Lord upon it. It is as you truly say,

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Mr. B., the outstretched hand of the Lord in itself, but it doth not unite the Lord to any, except he take hold of them with it: it is in itself that immortal seed, but may fall upon the very highway, Matt. xiii. 19, and so have no good effect at all, either in truth or appearance: the messengers of it are the Lord's mouth unto them to whom it is sent, but all receive not this message to whom it comes; "some make light of it," Matt. xxii. 4—6, and neglect it, others do evilly entreat them that bring it, hating, reviling, and persecuting both them and it. Acts xii. 45; xvii. 18. Now will you say that God strikes hands with these men, and on his part enters covenant with them actually, because his Word is published amongst them? The inward, and invisible hand of the Spirit must not only be stretched out by the Lord, but must seize, and take hold of the heart, and be effectual, invisibly and internally, before this invisible union be made on the Lord's part: so must the Lord's outward, and visible hand, his Word, not only be stretched out, but also seize, and take hold of the outward man, at the least, and be effectual visibly and externally upon him, before the Lord can be said on his part to have contracted any visible union.

In the next place comes the visible hand of man, by which he on his part contracts with God, and enters covenant with him visibly: and that Mr. B. makes the open profession of faith unto the doctrine taught, which such as make, he saith, have visibly taken hold of the Word, and struck hands with God.

You make much of nothing, Mr. B., or of that which is worse than nothing. Even now the profession of faith made the true matter of the church, and here it must make the true form of the Church: and yet the truth is, that in the forming of your national English Church by a new covenant from that wherein it stood in Popery, which was by your own grant, with saints and angels instead of God, and, I add, with Antichrist in the stead of Christ, no such profession of faith was made, as yourself here do both require, and prove necessary for the forming of the visible church, or her uniting with God. And that I manifest in two particulars.

The former is that the profession of faith required for a

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people's uniting with the Lord their God, must be made both freely, and particularly by the persons themselves so uniting. And this appears both by that which you have said of God's giving, or sending his Word, which is his visible outstretched hand, by which he offereth reconciliation unto men personally, and so, by consequence, requires that they stretch out the hand of personal profession to him: and also by the scriptures alleged by you; all which do give witness of such a confession of faith, and sins, as was freely made by the persons themselves particularly, which were joined to the church. Let the reader take knowledge of these scriptures amongst the rest, Matt. iii. 6; Acts ii. 38; 1 Cor. xv. 1.

Second. The profession of faith noted in the scriptures by you produced, was not made by men of lewd conversation, or apparently unsanctified, of whom alone, and their union with God our question is, but by men visibly, and externally holy: and such, as all of them were, visibly, and so far as men in charity could judge, justified, sanctified, and entitled to the promises of salvation, and life eternal. The scriptures are, (besides the three last named, Matt. iii. 6; Acts ii. 38, with which compare verse 37, 41, 47; 1 Cor. xv. 1;) Matt. x. 32, 40, 41; Acts viii. 12, 13, 37, 38; 1 Cor. vi. 11; Col. ii. 11, 12; Tit. iii. 5. Who but you, Mr. Bernard, would thus wrong either these scriptures as justifying the admission of lewd persons, deserving to be excommunicated, into the church, or the apostles of Christ for admitting or baptizing such? And yet these persons are the true bad matter, for which you pleaded so much formerly: and which here by these scriptures, you would bring into a true bad union with God. For of these for the most part, hath the nation always consisted, and of these your church was gathered at the first, when it became national, and so hath stood formed ever since.

The third and last thing for the perfecting of this visible covenant, and uniting of the members one to another, Mr. B. makes, the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which as it is a seal of our faith, so is it a testimony of that visible communion of love, also of one member with another. 1 Cor. x. 16, 17. Page 120.

You confound all things, in saying the sacrament makes

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the covenant; which is a seal of it, and presupposeth both the covenant, and the church, whereof it is an ordinance. The covenant must be before the church, and the church before the sacrament: how then can the sacrament make the church? And where you further call it an holy sacrament, a seal of faith, a testimony of the visible communion of love, and of one member with another, you speak the truth, but not truly: such it is in itself, and in the right administration and use of it: but not in the profane abuse of it upon wicked men, of whom we speak: and for whom and their uniting with Christ you here plead. Upon whom whilst you, and the rest of the ministers of your church, do profane it, as you do, the more holy it is in itself, the more unholy is your fact, and the more heinous your sin. It is as you say, the seal of faith, and of the forgiveness of sins through faith to the penitent and believers, but is it, therefore, so and such to apparently impenitent and unbelieving persons? it is in itself a testimony of the communion of love, but is it so unto and among the wicked? or is it not, in that abuse, made a lying witness to testify, and witness love, where apparent hatred and malice reign against God and good men? It is an outward pledge, or symbol of the communion which the faithful have with Christ, for of that the apostle speaketh, 1 Cor. x. 16, 17, directly, and so by consequence, one with another: and because it unites Christ, the head, with his own members, and one of them with another, doth it therefore unite Christ or his true members, with the true, apparent, visible limbs of the devil, which all ungodly men and women are? This is the force of Mr. B.'s arguments. Because the Lord's Supper is of this or that use unto them, to whom by the Word of God it appertains, therefore it hath or must be judged to have the same use amongst them which are apparent usurpers of it, and to whom by the Word of God it appertains not. There is nothing more common in both his books, than this kind of deceitful arguing.

Here is yet an argument of comparison to be taken knowledge, and considered of; and the rather because the author both wills the reader to note it, in the margin, and repeats it himself over and over, in the text.

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The argument is that, as continual sins and corruptions of the hearts of the elect, do not make them false Christians before God, or no true invisible members of Christ: so neither do outward offences, or corruptions, make open professors of the faith, false Christians before men, or no true visible members of Christ. True, no more; due proportion observed: namely, that those outward offences do not reign in the mortal bodies of men, as the inward corruptions do not reign in the hearts of the elect.

But let the reader here remember the subject of the question, which is, men of lewd conversation, and deserving to be excommunicated, and then the noting of Mr. B.'s argument, will be like David's noting the Amalekites' tidings of the death of Saul and Jonathan, to the destruction of him that brought them. 2 Sam. i. 15. For by the same rule of proportion I argue thus. As they in whose hearts, sins and corruptions reign inwardly, are no true Christians before God, nor actual members of Christ invisibly: so they in whose lives and conversations, sins and corruptions reign outwardly, are no true Christians before men, nor members of Christ visibly. And here comes to my mind another argument much-what like this, in Mr. B.'s second book: where he will have a mixed company of godly and wicked persons to be called holy, or a company of saints, as well as a person, holy, in whom there is a mixture of the Spirit and flesh. But the difference is plain. In this mixed body of godly and wicked, sin reigns in some of the members, but in no part of body, or faculty of soul of a person in whom the Spirit is, though never so much flesh be mingled with it, doth sin reign. He might as well say, the whole church so mixed shall be saved: for the whole man shall be saved, by faith in Christ, notwithstanding all mixture in him.

No Profession in the English Church.

Now the conclusion Mr. B. makes, that their congregations profess Christ, as is before said; that God hath given them his holy Word, and sacraments: and moved the hearts of all them outwardly to receive both the one and the other, is unproved, and untrue. Page 122.

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For first, There is no one congregation in the land whose particular members made that holy profession in any measure, by and according to which the apostles did constitute and unite visible congregations. Secondly, I deny that the Lord hath given his sacraments to any congregation in the land: there are very many in the best ordered parishes, which take them without the Lord's gift: as being wicked usurpers of them, but unto which by the revealed will of God they have no right.

But here I must needs discover Mr. Bernard's haunt, and the turning, by which in his second book he usually declines both Mr. Ainsworth's and Mr. Smyth's arguments of this nature: and that is, by telling them, pp. 249, 250, &c., that all are not wicked amongst them, that some, or many have the true knowledge of God's Word: and that the fear of God possesseth the hearts of many: as in this place, that God hath moved the hearts of many of the people effectually, and the like: and that therefore we do them wrong in condemning all for some: and in denying the good their right, for others' default.

To this I answer, first, That those that can be truly judged to fear God, are thin strewed in the best places: and not many in comparison of the rest, as is pretended, but a very small handful: and besides, it is but casual, and accidental to the congregation, and nothing to the constitution of it, that there is one man truly fearing God in it. The parish must be a true visible constituted church as well one as another, and so receive the sacraments together, whether the Lord have had any such work, as is here spoken of, in the hearts of any, or no. And secondly, It must be considered, and I pray the reader well to observe it, that the question here betwixt Mr. B. and me, and so ordinarily betwixt him and them, is about the congregation, which consists of all the members jointly, and not about some particulars considered severally from the rest, of whom the congregation consists not. I am verily persuaded there are in many congregations many that truly fear God: and the Lord increase their number, and graces, and if they were separated from the rest into visible communion, I should not doubt to account them such congregations, as unto which God had given his Sacraments:

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but take them as they are even one with the rest, in one joint communion, as members of one body, making all together one church, and congregation, so joined at the first, and so still remaining, I deny that this church, or congregation is the Lord's people in covenant with him: or that he hath given unto it his sacraments: yea, or that those, which truly fear God, and are accepted of him in their persons, have in that communion, the right and lawful use of them in many particulars. They cannot take them for pawns and pledges of God's love, and the forgiveness of sins, to that congregation, wherewith they join in the use of them: nor as testimonies of true spiritual love amongst the persons communicating in them: nor as notes and badges of distinction, of that assembly, from all profane and unhallowed assemblies in the world. And yet are all these common ends and uses of the sacrament, as it is a communion, or common union of the members with the head, and one with another mutually. Since therefore your congregations, or parish assemblies are, and always have been so constituted, as that neither the greatest part of them, being profane, have any interest in the sacraments, or can have any right use of them in their persons, nor yet the rest in their communion: it must needs follow, except the Lord have given his sacraments to them, which can have no right use of them, and to whom they appertain not, that the Lord hath not given his holy sacraments to your congregations. And where you further add, that God hath moved the hearts of all the people of your congregations outwardly to receive both the Word, and sacraments, it is one, amongst the rest of your bold, but bare affirmations. Are there not many thousands amongst you that understand not the doctrine of the beginning of Christ, Heb. vi. 1, the very first principles of Christian religion? And hath God persuaded the hearts of these to receive the Word and sacraments, in any sense? The Lord Jesus teacheth us in the gospel that "every man that doth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to light, lest his deeds should be reproved." John iii. 20. And yet you will have us believe, that God hath persuaded the hearts of all the evil-doers amongst you, not only to come to the light, but also to receive it.

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Let your own parish, Mr. B. stand for instance. There were in it, to mine own knowledge, when you wrote this book, that held most blasphemous errors touching the very Trinity; and there are at this day, as I am certainly informed, who are so moved to receive the Word, as that your church-wardens are driven to spend a great part of the Lord's-day in hunting them from the ale-house to the temple. And if this be your case, what is the condition of the most congregations in the land, to which the Word of God hath not so much as been offered in any indifferent measure, for the moving of their hearts to receive it? The truth is, the people are drawn in the most congregations, the most of them, and many in all, by compulsive laws, to keep their parish church, to hear Divine service, to communicate at Easter, and to receive the sacraments, and other rites: as is commanded in the communion book: but how far the most are from having their hearts thus moved, as is pretended of all, to receive the Word of God, appeareth too evidently in that great contempt and hatred wherein they have such amongst themselves, as do in any sincerity either preach or profess the same. To these things I may further add, that since the Lord hath given his Word and sacraments to be dispensed to no people, but by the means which he hath prescribed in his Word; except the English priesthood, and liturgy were prescribed by the Word of God, for these ministrations, even in this respect God cannot be said to have given his Word, and sacraments to the congregations spoken of.

Now, although this which hath been said in answer to your grounds be sufficient to disprove the form of your church, as you yourself, Mr. B., raise it, yet for your further conviction, I will add certain arguments to manifest, and make plain, that wicked and ungodly men and women are incapable, by the Word of the Lord, of his covenant, and of all spiritual visible union with him; and so consequently your congregations, gathered of such persons at the first, and of such still consisting generally, with a handful of godly-minded scattered amongst them, to remain unformed, by the Lord's holy covenant.

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Ungodly Persons cannot be of the True Church.

The arguments are:—

First, Because godly and wicked men are contraries, as being guided and led by contrary causes, the one sort by the Spirit, and the other by the flesh, Gal. v. 18, which are contrary one unto another. Now two contraries are not capable of one and the same form.

Wicked men, and such as hate to be reformed are forbidden, by the revealed will of God, from meddling with his covenant, or ordinances, Psa. l. 16, 17; and therefore are not by the revealed will of God received into covenant with him, or to the participation of his ordinances, which are both one.

Since wicked men are by the Word of God, as you yourself grant, to be excommunicated, that is to be cut off from the visible union with Christ and his church, how can they be said by the same Word of God, to be capable of this union with Christ and his church? nothing can be either more unreasonably affirmed, or more ungodlily practised.

Lastly, The Scriptures do expressly debar men of lewd and ungodly conversation, of all fellowship, union, and communion with God. "If we say, that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not truly," saith the apostle, 1 John i. 6, "and what fellowship," saith Paul, "hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath the believer with the unbeliever, or infidel?" &c., 2 Cor. vi. 14—18. The former of these scriptures is so directly against you, as if it were recorded by the Holy Ghost with particular respect to your error. You say that men though of a lewd conversation, that is, walking in darkness, have visible fellowship, union, and communion with God, if they profess they believe in Christ, or so say. John, on the contrary, teacheth that they which walk in darkness, have no fellowship with God, though they so say, but are liars. The other scripture must be further opened and enforced: considering how you charge us in your

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second book, page 140, with the wretched abuse of it; and labour by a long discourse to wring it out of our hands: as being our "special weapon," as you say "to fight for separation, and to defend the same." The four heads under which you reduce all the particulars about it, I will prosecute in order, as they are by you laid down. First, the occasion; second, the scope; third, the matter entreated of; four, the persons spoken of.

For the first, it is true you affirm of the Christian Corinthians going to the idol feasts in the idol temples at the bidding of their friends, and kinsfolks, the heathen Corinthians; which I also acknowledge to have been the main and most immediate occasion of the apostle's writing, as he doth, but not the only occasion. There was a former occasion of that, namely their marrying with the unbelievers, and their unequal yoking with them, that way, ver. 14: by which the other mischief was occasioned amongst them, as it had been with other the servants of God before them, from the beginning of the world. Gen. vi. 2. In which respect, therefore, the Lord in the law forbad the Israelites to take of the daughters of the heathen unto their sons, lest they provoked them to go a whoring after their gods, Exod. xxxiv. 16: which when they neglected, and mingled themselves with idolaters in marriage, they presently fell into that monstrous mixture in religion, against which the apostle dealeth. Numb. xxv. 1 Kings xi. 1—4; Ezra ix. 1, 2.

But where for the clearing of yourselves of the very occasion, you do add, that you dwell not in civil society with idolaters, but under a Christian king, and with a people professing Christ, where no public idols are set up, nor any feasting in honour of them, you follow your old fashion of bold boasting without measure, or modesty. Do you not live in civil society with the idolaters? Have you no papists in your kingdom? I may say in your parish? or are papists become no idolaters with you, as Rome was right now, no false church, nor Jesuits false subjects? The face of your charity, Mr. B., is so full set towards Rome, and papists, as no marvel though you be so unequal towards us, as you are. The truth is, you are in the most strait-bond of civil society with popish

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idolaters, that may be. There is nothing more common amongst them of your church, than to join in marriage with them: neither is there, to my knowledge, amongst all your canons any one against this profane commixture. Neither is it anything you speak of living under a Christian king, or with a people professing Christ: for idolaters may live under a Christian king, and profess Christ too in a measure, as both many others, and all antichristian idolaters do. Yea, I have formerly manifested, that you live not only in civil, but even in religious society with papists, and you yourself grant as much of atheists in the beginning of your book: and will you say that visible atheists are true visible matter of the church, and capable, by the Word of God, of true visible fellowship and communion with Christ, and the true members of his body?

The scope of the scripture followeth, which, say you, "is, that the believing Corinthians may have no fellowship with the infidels, and unbelievers, in their evil works; but that they reprove, condemn, hate, and avoid them."

Belike, then, they might have had fellowship with them in any good work: and so if any of the heathen or infidel Corinthians would have communicated with the Christian Corinthians in the sacraments, or prayer, they might not have refused their fellowship, or communion herein. For by your exposition, the apostle only forbids partaking with them in evil works and the works of darkness. Of which more hereafter. And here, in our names, you frame an objection, the sum whereof is, that if all the godly would separate from all the wicked, then there should be no wicked of the church. Unto which you answer sundry things: but how sufficiently will appear in the particulars. First you say, God commands not his to separate wholly from all the wicked: but from infidels, Gentiles, idolaters, Jews, Turks, papists, whose very societies are to be left as no people of God.

Well then, I perceive, all religious fellowship with papists is unlawful, and that their societies are no people of God. And how agrees this with your other affirmations, that Rome is a true church: papists, true Christians, though under corruptions, as it was true Job, though under sores: baptism there, a true sacrament, and a seal of the covenant;

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and yet here the societies of papists are no people of God, that is, in no covenant with him? Or how doth this separation thus wholly to be made from papists agree with that you write, "Christian Advertisements," page 91, of joining in prayer with such papists, as though they be of the Church of Rome, yet sorrow for the abominations, and as are come out from it in their souls, the best part, though not so in their bodies?

The distinction you put between infidels, and idolaters, and men of profane life, we shall consider of in due place: and for your speech of all the church, falling into the estate of infidelity, and so judged of the church, either it is without sense, or I, which understand it not. Now to that you add of separating from the private familiarity of the wicked, living in the society of the godly, and that, if they will not be reformed, other courses are to be taken with them, as their sin of obstinacy deserves, I answer these things. First, That, as there is a case, wherein private withdrawing from a brother is warrantable, namely, when his offence is private, and he privately obstinate, and that his sin either cannot be, or is not yet made public, and publicly evinced: so to separate from men privately, and that only, for public offences, is a course without ground either of scripture, or reason. You say, page 144, that Calvin so expounds 1 Cor. v. 11, and thereupon do take an occasion to accuse our practice as Brownistical, and us of Luciferian schism, and Pharisaical pride. As I leave your railings to be judged by the Lord, so do I give the reader to understand, how you grossly abuse Calvin's authority: who expounds that scripture, as all men know it is meant, of excommunicates, and of men's private carriage towards them: with which, public separation is also to be joined: I suppose you yourself will not deny it. And where you speak of another course to be taken with wicked men, that will not be reformed, you should also show what that course is, and what is to be done, if that course be not taken: but you have thought it a point of your wisdom to be silent in these things lest by opening them too particularly, you should discover your own shame.

The course to be taken is, the censuring of such incorrigible offenders by the particular congregation, whereof

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they are, being gathered together in the name of Christ, by the power of Christ; 1 Cor. v. 4; with which power divine, and heavenly privilege, he hath furnished his churches every one of them, as well as that one of Corinth; neither doth any true church of Christ want this power, or neglect the use of it without sin. And if any church of Christ would neglect to use this power against scandalous sin manifestly proved, and convinced, and would obstinately continue, notwithstanding all good means used to the contrary, this sour leaven unpurged out, the whole lump were leavened, and with leaven might not the passover be eaten. And as the church, if sin do arise, is first to endeavour the casting out of the sin, by the sinner's repentance, and if that will not be, in the last place to cast out the sin and sinner together: so if the church do wickedly bear out, and bolster iniquity amongst themselves, such as are faithful are first to quit themselves of that church's sin by testifying against it, and reproving it, and in the last place to quit themselves of the church, if it remain incurable.

Now here you bring in certain differences, and distinctions of separation, but without application. The first I omit as being before handled, so much as concerns the present purpose. The second difference is between the wicked remaining among the godly, and the godly being of the fellowship of the wicked: this difference I acknowledge, and withal affirm, that the latter part of it notes out the estate of your national church: wherein a few godly minded in comparison, live in the fellowship of a wicked and sinful nation. And if persons, excommunicate by the church, be not of her fellowship, then certainly the number of the godly in your fellowship is very small: since your national church representative, the convocation house, whose act also, page 147, you avouch to be the act of all the church, and so to be accounted, doth pronounce *ipso facto* excommunicated all that do affirm either the ceremonies of the church, or government by archbishops, bishops, deans, archdeacons, and the rest, to be antichristian, or the books either of common prayer, or of consecrating bishops, priests, and deacons, to contain in them anything unlawful, or repugnant to the Word of God.*

* Canon 4, 6, 7, 8.

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Your third distinction I pass by as impertinent: and the fourth, as being already handled, save only, that in the end of it you bite at us, as you go, for separating from God's ordinances in the church, for some wicked men's sake. But you know, Mr. B. that we do not deem your church government, worship, ministry, and ministrations to be God's ordinances: nor your church, in that confusion wherein it was gathered and consisteth, to be rightly possessed of the ordinances which it enjoys: no, nor that any person how godly-minded soever, can have the right use of God's ordinances, in your assemblies, as they are public joint exercises of the communion of the body. In the fifth, and last difference, you speak of godly men's breaking society with themselves, because of some wicked persons. To which point I answer thus much, since the Lord Jesus hath given his churches, both power and charge to put from among them such wicked persons as do arise and appear incorrigible; and hath also taught by his apostle, that the neglect of this duty leavens the whole lump: that they which countenance, and continue in the church such wicked persons against the godly zealous, which endeavour their reformation, that they I say, do break the society of the godly with themselves, and do rather make choice of the society of the wicked, whom they thus bolster, and bear out.

In the third place we are to consider of "the matter entreated of, and found fault with by the apostle, 2 Cor. vi. which," you say, "is in sum thus much: believers are not to be with the wicked in their unrighteousness, in the state of their darkness, nor to partake with them in their evils, and so to agree together: which no way helps our separation from light, righteousness, &c."

It is true that the particular matter the apostle finds fault with, is, the believing Corinthians communicating with the unbelievers in the idol feasts: but withal it must be considered, that the apostle upon this particular occasion delivers a general doctrine, than which nothing is more usual both in the Old and New Testament. The same apostle in his former epistle to the same Corinthians takes occasion from the fornicator among them, to forbid them the companying, or commingling not only with fornicators, but with covetous persons, idolaters, railers, drunkards,

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extortioners, and all other wicked men whomsoever, chap. v. 1, 11, so in this place, he takes occasion from their communicating with idolaters in the Idolathytes,* and the uncleanness thence arising, to enjoin them separation from all other uncleanness, whether of persons or things, as the whole tenor of the scripture manifesteth. More particularly: though the apostle, as you would have it, did only forbid partaking with the wicked in their evils, yet even therein did he forbid all religious communion with them since their very prayers, and other sacrifices are their evils: wherein whilst the godly do communicate with them, what do they else but acknowledge their common right and interest in those holy things? But that the apostle, in this scripture, forbids communion not only in the evil works of wicked men, but with their persons: and that he commands a separation not only real, but personal, doth appear by these reasons.

First, Because the scripture hath reference to the yoking of the believers with the unbelievers in marriage, as the occasion of that spiritual idolatrous mixture, which he reproves. Now this joining was not in an evil or unlawful thing, but with wicked and unlawful persons.

Secondly, The very terms, believers, unbelievers; light, darkness; Christ, Belial, do import opposition not of things only, but of persons also for the things' sake. So the faithful are called righteousness, light, and as they are light, so are the ungodly, darkness: and so not only their works but their persons are called. 2 Cor. v. 21; Matt. v. 14; Eph. v. 8.

Thirdly, The apostle forbids all unlawful communion in this place: but there is an unlawful communion of the faithful with the wicked, in things lawful: as with excommunicates, idolaters, heretics, or any other flagitious persons, in the sacraments, prayer, and other religious exercises in the respects formerly by me laid down: whereupon it was, that the Jews were to separate themselves not only from the manners of the heathen, but even from their persons. Ezra ix. 1, 2; x. 2, 3; Nehem. ix. 2; x. 28, 30. And that Paul reproves the Corinthians, Epis. 1, chap. v., for having fellowship not in the person's incest, but with the incestuous person: whom therefore they were

* Idol sacrifices.

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to purge out, and to put away from among themselves, ver. 5, 7, 13.

Fourthly, The apostle enjoins such a separation, as upon which a people is be reputed God's people, the temple of the living God, and may challenge his promise to be their God, to dwell among them, and to walk there. 2 Cor. xvi. 17. And as for the temple, where the Lord promised to dwell, the timber and stones, whereof it was to be built, were to be selected, and separated from all the trees in the forest, and stones in the rock, and to be hewed and squared accordingly, and so to be set together in that comely order, which was prescribed: so, that this spiritual house, or temple, the church now, may have the promise of God's presence, and dwelling there, it must be framed of spiritual stones, and timber first separated from the rest, and then fitted and prepared by that axe, or sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, and so coupled, and combined together in due order, and proportion. Besides, it is evident, that the Holy Ghost hath reference, in this place, to the people of the Jews, which was separated from all other peoples and persons in the world: as appeareth, Lev. xx. 24; xxvi. 11, 12, therein noting out what must be the course and condition of the Israel of God to the world's end. Gal. vi. 16.

But here Mr. B. excepts, page 136, against our exposition of these places of Leviticus and the like, as miserably wrested, and falsely applied to our separation. "For by God's separating them from other people, is meant," saith he, "a setting apart of Abraham's posterity to a special service of God, and therein to be a people differing from all the world. And by other people is meant such as worshipped not the true God; which is nothing to them that worship Jesus Christ, &c. but no Israelites to separate from other Israelites, which were even then when Moses thus spake of separation, a corrupt people among themselves.

And is this your righting of our wrestings, Mr. B.? Elsewhere you tell us, that the Lord separates a people from others, and takes them to be his, before he so much as command them anything, page 176: and here the Lord sets a people apart to be his, and separates them from others, in respect of some special piece of service appointed them. The things you speak are contrary, but neither of

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them true. The Lord never did, nor will take people unto him, but by their submission, and obedience unto his commandments: and for that special service of God enjoined the Israelites, Rom. ix. 4, it was an effect of their separation from other people, and covenant with God: and no cause by or for which, they became the Lord's separated people.

We must always consider the church of God principally and properly in the persons of men, and secondarily in their works: as we must first consider the vineyard in the trees, and afterwards in the fruits they bring forth. Isa. v. 1—7; Matt. xxi. 33, 34. And so was Israel separated, and set apart from other people. Your addition, that by other people, is meant such as worshipped not the true God, which is nothing to you which worship Jesus Christ, &c., and that there is no place to prove that Israelites were to separate from other Israelites, for their corruptions, as false matter, is like that which goes before. For first, papists and anabaptists, with idolaters and heretics many more, do worship Jesus Christ; from whose societies notwithstanding you profess separation. 2. The Ishmaelites and Edomites did worship the true God, though not after a true manner, and yet the Israelites were a people separated from them: so as an Edomite, though he had voluntarily joined himself to the people of God, might not bear any public office amongst them, to the third generation, which you too ignorantly expound, page 248, of his admission into the church. Yea, I do further add, that even Israelites, and those which came of Israel, or Jacob, were commanded to separate themselves from Israelites, and that for an usurpation in the ministry, as the Scriptures make it plain, Numb. xxvi., as afterwards also upon Jeroboam's defection in the ministry, worship, and holy days, which he forged in his own heart. 2 Chron. ii. 13—16, with 1 Kings xii. 28—32.

And thus is the exposition cleared, against your frivolous exceptions of such scriptures, in Leviticus and elsewhere, as make mention of the separation of the Jewish nation from all other nations: which do fitly also serve to confirm and justify the separation of all the churches in the New Testament from such people and assemblies in all nations, as of

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whom the Lord by his revealed will cannot be said to accept, as I am sure he cannot, prŏfane and godless persons.

Now because the issue of all controversies depends upon the true exposition of the Scriptures, whose letter men will bring on both sides: and that Mr. B. takes special exception in this place against the expositions we give of such scriptures, as seem to us most material for our separation: I will therefore take in his exceptions, as I return whence I came, and make manifest, as God enableth me, the insufficiency of them.

The next place that comes into consideration is, Acts ii. 40, where, saith Mr. B., Peter speaks to the Jews of such Jews as denied Christ, and renounced the very foundation, even Jesus Christ, which is, if we will believe him, nothing to them that profess him to be the true Messias.

It seems then that separation is not to made from the papists, for they hold Jesus Christ to be the true Messias, and the very foundation: yea, even the merit of their works do they found upon the merit of Christ's obedience: derogating less in truth, though far too much, from the virtue of his priesthood, than you do in the constitution of your church from the dignity of his kingdom in the outward government and administration of it. 2. Your national church is so far from being separated from them that deny Christ, as it is indeed for substance, compact, and gathered of such: to wit of impure and profane persons, who whatsoever they do profess in word, do deny in deed and visibly both God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, as the Scriptures do expressly testify. Tit. i. 15, 16; Jude 4. And to deny that apparently wicked and profane men, or churches, do rase the foundation of religion, is a profane error, tending to libertinism; and which foundeth all religion and Christianity in the brain, and nothing in the heart. Lastly, Peter's exhortation upon the occasion in hand, was, that the faithful Jews should separate from that froward generation: whereupon the general doctrine is rightly raised, that the faithful at all times must be separated from all froward generations. And of this duty we are to make the greater conscience, considering the words of the apostle, which are, that we save ourselves from such froward gene-

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rations: as indeed, considering the duty we owe unto our brethren for their humbling, if they be froward in sin; the discomfort we have in continuing communion with them: the want of that godly furtherance we should have by our brethren in our holy communion: and lastly, the danger wherein we stand, either to be corrupted by them, or at least to have our zeal, and other graces of God decayed in us, our salvation doth not a little consist in our departure from the assembly of the profane, as Beza rightly notes upon this scripture.

Of the same nature with the former place is the next in order; where the apostle Paul both departs himself, and separates the disciples from such as were hardened, and would not obey, but spake evil of the way of the Lord before the multitude. Acts xix. 8, 9. But this, you say, proves not our purpose: and your exceptions are,

First, That our way is not the way of God. Second, That if it were, yet we have not spoken to all your church, and made it known to all, nor have found all hard-hearted: and, Third, That the place teacheth separation from such obstinate wicked, which will not be won to the church: and that here is a departing of some true members of the church from such as be not the church, but not of members of the true church forsaking members of the true church.

That our way is the way of God, appeareth by this very scripture, amongst many others; wherein also we have both the reformists at home, and reformed churches abroad, giving testimony with us for the substance of it. But put the case ours be not, yet if the way of the reformed churches be the way of God, our separation is justified by this scripture. For first, your convocation house and church representative is hardened against the way of the reformed churches, blaspheming, and persecuting it, and all them that either seek, or plead for it. And their act, being the chief, is, by your own grant, to be accounted the act of all, though the rest come not to consent, page 145: so that you are all, by your own words, to be accounted a disobedient and hardened people, upon the former premises, namely, that the way of the reformed churches is the way of God. But howsoever it be either with us, or them, yet if that narrow way, whereof Christ speaks, that leads unto life,

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Matt. vii. 14, be the way of God, then surely there are thousands in your national church, and many in every parish church in the kingdom, which speak evil of the way of God, yea, hate and persecute it to the utmost of their power, and all them that endeavour in any uprightness to walk in it. Whereof you yourself also, Mr. B., in former days have had experience: though for the opposing, reviling, and persecuting of us, you and they agreed well, and, like Herod and Pilate, were made friends. Now if we separate from all them which thus disobey, and speak evil of the way of God, we know too well we can have no communion with any assembly in the land. Lastly, You are greatly overseen in saying that Paul's separation was not from the church, nor members of the true church. It was from the church of the Jews, and the members of that church, with whom formerly he had held communion, as the true church of God; which for this their disobedience and unbelief, were broken off, and so afterwards indeed to be reputed. Rom. xi. 20.

One scripture more remains to be considered of, and that is John xvii. 6, 9, 14—16, whence we believe and confess that the true, visible church of Christ is gathered by separation from the world, and the men of the world visibly. Against this our exposition Mr. B. excepts, and will have this place understood of the elect only, that are ordained to life: and of invisible members: and of men as they are holy before God: rating us as egregious, deceitful abusers of this scripture, in applying it to the visible members, or church.

But most unjustly as appears by these three plain reasons.

First, Because Judas was one of them, whom the Father had given unto Christ out of the world, whom alone of all them so given him, he had lost, that the scripture might be fulfilled, ver. 6, 12, whence it is evident to all men, that do not blind their eyes, that Christ here speaks of such a donation, or gift, as was visible, or of such members as were visibly, and in respect of men separated, and sanctified from the world unto God, and not at all of any invisible gift, or members.

Secondly, Christ speaks of such persons as the world

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hated, because they were not of the world, ver. 14: but the wicked world doth not hate men, as they are elect before God, and invisibly or inwardly separated and sanctified, but as they are outwardly such, and so separated, whether they be inwardly so, or no.

Lastly, Christ speaks of such a choosing out of the world, as he doth of a sending into the world, ver. 18, which sending as it was visible, and external, so was the selection and separation spoken of. And say not for shame, Mr. B. that the visible church of Christ is to be gathered, or consist of the men of the world visibly. The church, and world are two distinct, yea two contrary states, and bodies, though the body of your national church were at the first gathered, and hath ever since consisted of the world, and all.

To conclude, this light man, being pressed by Mr. Ainsworth, in another place of his book, page 254, with this scripture, both affirms, and proves by many reasons, that Christ here speaks of a mixed company, which the elect are not. And howsoever his reasons be not only unsound, but indeed ungodly, wherein he affirms Christ to have been, in respect of men, the mediator of Paul, whilst he continued a persecutor, and of others wicked in respect of men, yea of Pilate, and the soldiers, pagans, and infidels, because he prayed for them, Matt. xxvii. 17, 24, with Luke xxiii. 34; whereas Christ's prayer for them was no proper effect of his mediatorship for his body, except we hold universal redemption, and make the whole world his body, but a most perfect demonstration of his love towards his enemies, left also a pattern unto us to the world's end, yet do they, with that he there labours to prove by them, compared with his affirmation of the contrary, in this place, manifest his great both weakness, and lightness in the things he affirms.

Union with the Unholy to be avoided.

And thus I return to the exposition of 2 Cor. vi. and in it to prove, that the apostle's meaning is to forbid communion and fellowship not only with wicked works, but also with the wicked persons themselves that walk in them. For which purpose I do add this one only consideration, namely: that the prophet Isaiah, from whom the apostle

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borroweth this phrase, "Come out from among them, separate yourselves, and touch none unclean thing, and I will receive you," ver. 17, doth not so properly speak of the departure, or separation, which the priests were to make from the sins of the Babylonians, as from their coasts, and persons: thereby teaching all Christians, which are that spiritual house, and holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Christ. 1 Pet. ii. 8; Rev. i. 6, that their separation and departure must be spiritually, as theirs was civilly, not only from the sins of spiritual Babylonians, or other unbelievers, and unclean persons, but even from their persons also, and from all personal communion with them. And as in the type, he that touched a dead man, or leper, or him that had an issue upon him, or other unclean person, or was by him touched, was legally unclean, and polluted, as well as he that touched, or was touched by any unclean thing whatsoever, Lev. xv. 7, 11, so in the thing typed, and truth, he that toucheth, or is touched by a man spiritually dead in sins, or that hath an issue of sin, or spiritual leprosy running upon him, he is spiritually polluted and defiled. Now without touching cannot the members of the same body, and one of another possibly consist. 1 Cor. xii. 2; xiii. 27.

But were it, as we would have it, that not only the works, but even the workers of wickedness were to be avoided for their works' sake: yet doth Mr. B. take a double exception against our interpretation of this scripture. The former is, that it serves not our turn, except we prove them all to live in darkness, in unrighteousness, to be in league with the devil, &c.

I do answer, that if light and darkness, believers and unbelievers, Christ and Belial, must have no fellowship together, then must the believers, and they that are in Christ forbear fellowship with all unbelievers, and men of Belial, so continuing incorrigible: and if any believers, or Christians will notwithstanding still combine with unbelievers, and godless men, it is their sin thus to confound the order which God hath set in separating from the faithful, with whom he hath joined them, by joining with the unbelievers, and unfaithful, from whom he hath separated them; 1 Cor. iv. yea I add, in dividing Christ from himself, and

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uniting him with Belial, and the devil, in his members, what in them lieth. To conclude, what reason hath Mr. B. thus to object, that all which are amongst them, live not in darkness, and that all are not in league with the devil, considering, that by his own exposition of this place, the very societies of Papists are to be left as no people of God, and yet all Papists live not in darkness, as here he understands it, nor are in league with the devil: neither indeed had they need, considering what league of spiritual communion he professeth elsewhere he will have with many of them.

Mr. B.'s second objection is, which he also makes the fourth head of his division, that there is no proportion betwixt the persons here mentioned, to be separated from, being infidels, and such as were no members of the church, and Gentiles, that had entertained no profession of Christ, on the one side; and the members of the church on the other side: and that the consequence follows not from infidels, heathens, pagans, idolaters, led by the devil, to Christians professing Christ, though in life not answerable to their profession.

Even now you justified separation from Papists by this scripture: and here you restrain it unto infidels, and Gentiles, that had not entertained any profession of Christ: as though Papists were infidels, or without all profession of Christ, which is contrary both to truth, and to your own express affirmation, everywhere, pages 132, 225, 226.

But my answer is, that howsoever infidelity and idolatry be two grievous sins, and which do principally separate those which continue in them, from God, and his church, yet not they alone, but any other transgressions as well as they, obstinately stood in, do raise this wall of separation: as is manifest in the Scriptures.

And first, The apostle in this very place disjoins righteousness and unrighteousness, light and darkness, as far asunder, as believers and unbelievers, as the temple of God and idols: in which former also, the union betwixt Christ and Belial is as monstrous as in the latter. Unto which I do also add, that Mr. B. in this very place, debarring infidels and idolaters from being matter of the true church, lays this down as a cause, or reason, that they are led by the devil, whereupon it followeth, that since none other

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wicked men are led by Christ, but all by the devil, as well as they, that none other can be matter of the true church, more than they, Rom. viii. 14; Gal. v. 25; 2 Tim. ii. 26; 1 John iii. 8. And that some persons "led by the devil" should be matter of the church, and some not, is a distinction not found in the Scriptures, but devised for a remedy against the iniquities of the times, and for the avoiding of trouble, and dissipation.

Secondly, As the Scriptures do everywhere denounce the same judgments upon other wicked men, and upon idolaters, and infidels; for example, that, as well he that defileth his neighbour's wife or oppresseth the poor, or gives forth upon usury, shall die the death, as he that eats upon the mountains, or lifts up his eyes unto the idols, Ezek. xviii. 11—13; and that as well whoremongers, murderers, and such as love or make lies, as idolaters, shall be without the heavenly Jerusalem, Rev. xxi. 8; xxii. 15: so do they also both warrant, and direct us the same course of walking towards the one and other. The Lord Jesus, Matt. xviii. 17, enjoins the Church to account every obstinate offender as an heathen. And the apostle Paul gives the Corinthians in charge as much to avoid fornicators, covetous persons, railers, drunkards, and extortioners, as idolaters, 1 Cor. v. 11. And no marvel, for covetous persons are idolaters, Eph. v. 5; and so are carnal men, idolaters, making their belly their God. Phil. iii. 19. Unto these add, that the same apostle unto Titus calls unholy, and profane persons, what profession of God soever they make, *απιστοι*, unbelievers, or infidels, Tit. i. 15, 16, page 264, which are the same, which scripture I wish the reader to observe in respect of Mr. B.'s bold challenge of all the Brownists in the world to show the term, or name of unbelievers to be given to such as are not become absolute apostates from Christ.

Lastly, Unto that which Mr. B. objecteth in the fifth and last place against our exposition of this scripture to the Corinthians, for our separation, namely that at this very time, when the apostles thus writ, there were of them which did partake with the heathen, that they were a mixed company, among whom were dissensions, envying, open incest, drunkenness at the Lord's Supper, fornication, wantonness, men denying the resurrection, I do give this answer.

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As there was this mixture in the church at this time, so doth the apostle most severely reprove the same. For the incestuous man suffered uncensured, he pronounceth "the whole lump leavened," 1 Epist. v. For the abuse of the Lord's Supper, that they "came together not with profit, but with hurt," chap. xi. 17; where I entreat the reader also to take knowledge of the counsel, which upon that occasion Beza gives in his annotations upon ver. 31, which is, that we try, and examine ourselves, by faith, and repentance, separating ourselves from the wicked. For this very sin here spoken of, namely their partaking with idols in the idolathytes, that they could not partake of the Lord's Supper. "You cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils. You cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils," 1 Cor. x. 21. And in this very place about which we now contend, that except they separated themselves, and left this their ungodly mixture, they could not have the promise of the Lord, that he would dwell among them, and walk there, and that he would be their God, and have them his people, ver. 16. And doth the Holy Ghost in leaving these things recorded give any countenance to a mixed company? or can you from hence either take unto yourself, or give unto others any comfort in your or their confused walking? Will you make yourself a medicine of their poison? or a plaster of their ulcers? You are a physician of no value. Besides, it must be considered, that all the evils mentioned amongst the Corinthians were contrary to their constitution, and so many aberrations and defections from that estate and condition wherein the church was gathered. It is evident that Paul planted the church at Corinth, he being God's labourer, and it God's husbandry. 1 Cor. iii. 6, 9. Now, who dare open so profane a mouth, as to affirm, that this faithful labourer would plant the Lord's vineyard with such imps, or gather unto him a church of any such flagitious persons, as fornicators, drunkards, incestuous men, or such as denied the resurrection? But what is this to your national church, which was constituted, and gathered, for the greatest part, of fornicators, drunkards, blasphemers, and the like? with such wild branches was your vineyard planted!

Thus much of our interpretation, and application of 2 Cor. vi.

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The National Church not under Divine Approval.

I will here only add one argument more to prove your national church incapable of the new covenant or testament, by which you yourself do grant, and truly, the Church of Christ to be formed.

The prophet Jeremiah speaking in the name of the Lord, of the calling of the Gentiles into the new covenant, or testament, as the author to the Hebrews expoundeth him, testifieth, that with whomsoever the Lord would make that testament or covenant, he would put his law in their mind, and write them in their heart, and so be their God, and make them his people: and that they should all know him from the least to the greatest, and that he would be merciful unto their sins, and remember their iniquities no more, Jer. xxxi. 31, 33, 34; Heb. viii. 8, 10—12. But your national church never came within the compass of this promise, that all in it should know the Lord, have their sins forgiven them, and his laws written in their heart. Therefore your national church is not within the Lord's covenant, nor ever was, nor his people having him for their God.

Your exceptions in your second book, page 152, to this argument are insufficient. The first is, that, by this exposition, hypocrites should not be under the covenant, because the law of God is not written in their hearts. But my answer is, that hypocrites in respect of God and his secret, invisible, and approving will, and calling, are not of the church, nor under the covenant: but in respect of men, and of the revealed will of God, according to which men must judge, all that are outwardly holy, have their sins forgiven, and the law of God written in their hearts. And to your second exception, namely, "that the place is not understood barely of a member of the visible church, but so of it, as withal he be an elect saint," I do answer, it is true you say, considering what bare members of the visible church you make, and of what members your church is most-what made, even such as are both bare and empty of all grace, and appearance of grace. But let them be such in any measure, as of whom the Lord in his Word gives approbation, and whom he entitles to the

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visible ordinances in his church, and then they are not barely visible members, as you speak, but elect saints also, in the respects formerly mentioned.

It is evident that both Jeremiah, and the apostle to the Hebrews speak of the new testament or covenant of grace, whereof Christ is the mediator in his own blood; opposed to the old testament and covenant of works established by Moses in the blood of bulls, and goats: and of the persons with whom the Lord makes this covenant, and which have legacies in this will and testament of Christ, which he hath also confirmed by his death: which do all know God, and have his law written in their hearts, and their sins pardoned. And there is nothing more derogatory to the grace of God, and blood of Christ, than that any within the compass of this covenant of grace, or having a portion in this testament established in Christ's blood, should not have his iniquities forgiven, and his heart sanctified by the Spirit, truly or in appearance, as he is truly or apparently partaker of the former graces. And here also appears the vanity of your third exception so oft repeated by you, to wit, that you are not all without the law of God written in your hearts, and without the forgiveness of sins, but that some of you have obtained this grace. As though the question were of some few in your church, and not of the whole church. If you minded what you had in hand, you should see, that to prove your church within the covenant of the new testament, you were bound to manifest, not that some few, but that all the members of it were, at the least in the constitution, partakers of those promises, wherein it is established: the reason is because not some few severally, but all the members jointly considered, do make the church.

John in the Revelation, ch. ix. 7, 8, describing the locusts, saith of them, that they had faces like the faces of men, and hair like the hair of women. Doth it therefore follow they were men or women, because they had eyes, mouths, noses, and some other members that men and women have? So neither is a profane people a true Christian church or body of Christ for some few Christian-like persons unequally yoked with them, since the church, or body, as I have formerly said, consisteth not of some

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few but of all the members coupled and combined together in one communion.

And thus much to prove that lewd and ungodly persons, so continuing, are incapable of the new covenant or testament confirmed by the death of Christ: and that they have no fellowship, or union with God in Christ, in whom alone he establisheth his covenant: and if any man will affirm the contrary, not I, but John, by the Word of God, reproveth him expressly for a liar. 1 John i. 8. And indeed what more impudent untruth can there be affirmed, than that an apparent visible limb of Satan should be an apparent, or visible member of Christ; or that graceless persons should be within the covenant of grace, and salvation, as is that covenant into which the Lord gathereth, and in which he uniteth his church unto himself?

For conclusion of this point, let the reader observe, that as the church is essentially constituted by this union of the members with God, and one with another, so, consider it as an ecclesiastical policy instituted by Christ the King thereof, and then that form or order of government, which he hath set, and which the apostolic churches used, and enjoyed, is the form of it: as it is in all other policies, corporations, and commonwealths in the world. Which form of government the Church of England is so far from enjoying, as it hates worse than papists all that in any measure desire it.

The Properties and Privileges of the Church.

Now as from the matter and form of the church concurring do arise the properties, so would Mr. B. in the next place justify against us, that the congregations amongst them have the true visible properties of the church, which he makes three in number: the first, their continuance in hearing of the doctrine of Christ received, and using of the sacraments and prayer. Second, the holding out of this truth and the sacraments, as banners displayed against the enemy. Third, a care for the welfare of all, and every one for the whole, and each for other: though in his 2nd book, pages 283—285, (as if it had not been he,) First, the holding out of the profession of the person covenanted with, Christ Jesus: Second, the hold-

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ing the words of the covenant, the written Word of God: Thirdly, the maintaining of the publication of this covenant by the reading, and interpretation of it in the assemblies, are become the properties of the church: as if the church were as changeable in her properties, as he is in his.

And here I must needs take knowledge of Mr. B.'s distinction in his 2nd book betwixt the properties and privileges of the church, and the rather, because he lays it down with great ostentation for our learning, as he saith. His distinction is, that properties arise from within the church, and privileges from without: and my learning from his distinction is, that he undertakes to teach others where he hath not yet learned himself. His error then is in the too strait acceptation of the term property, which he should take in a larger sense, as Mr. Smyth hath rightly taught him: namely that, whatsoever is proper unto a person or thing, whether within or without, and not common to other things or persons, with him, or it, that is a property or propriety of that person or thing. And so, since all her privileges wherewith Christ hath endowed his church, are proper, and peculiar unto the church, and not common to her with the world, it is most evident, they are all of them the church's properties, and so to be accounted, though she may for a time want the actual use of many of them. And even those privileges which yourself bring for instances, are true properties of the church; as to be called saints, faithful, elect: to suffer for Christ: to be the ark to keep the books of the covenant: to set to the seals: to use the keys to open and to shut heaven: than which what can be more proper or peculiar unto the church? And it is strange that saintship and holiness, grace to suffer for Christ, and the like should not be accounted more natural properties of the church, than a profane profession of faith and usurpation of some ordinances of religion by lewd and ungodly persons.

But touching the properties of the church by you laid down, my answer is, that except your national church be that true Israel of God, which he hath admitted jointly and severally into the covenant and fellowship of grace, and salvation, and to whom he hath given the promises of that covenant, and to whom by his revealed will the seals,

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and sacraments for the confirmation of these promises do appertain, the more you meddle with this covenant by professing or publishing it, the more you take God's name in vain; and the more of the ordinances of God, and his covenant, you use and enjoy, the more you abuse and usurp: and the longer you continue in so doing, the more dangerous is your estate, and the more to be bewailed.

And for the things themselves, by which you would have the church of Christ distinguished from all other assemblies, they are such, as may in the outward ceremony, and observation of them, without any sanctified use, which is the point in controversy between me and you, both be performed, and continued in, either for fear or fashion by any accursed conventicle of atheists, murderers, adulterers, or the like; yea, by a company of men and women excommunicated for these and the like transgressions. And can these things which lie thus in common to all, be the true properties of the church?

Second. I must be bold to tell you, Mr. B. that the holding out of the truth and sacraments are not so properly the displayed banners of your church, as is the observation of your popish ceremonies. The surplice is a banner far broader displayed than the preaching of the gospel, or ministration of the sacraments; the cross is a standard higher advanced than baptism; so is kneeling, than the Lord's Supper: without these neither the Word may be preached, nor the sacraments administered; but where these banners are set up, and fair borne, there is that which is required, and will serve the turn, though there be very little truth held out, either by preaching, knowledge, or obedience, but the contrary.

Lastly, Where speaking of the marks and tokens of the true church, you will the reader to observe well, that "they are not the Word truly preached, nor the sacraments rightly administered, but the true Word preached, and the true sacraments administered," I cannot but observe it well, and in it, both your error and lightness. In your little Catechism printed 1602, pages 13, 14, you demand this question, What are the marks of the true church here on earth? to which your answer is, amongst some other things, Christ's Word truly preached, and his sacraments rightly administered.

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But now, in your "Separatist's Schism," pages 122, 123, "Not the Word truly preached, but the true Word, nor the sacraments rightly administered, but the true sacraments, are the infallible and convertible marks and tokens of the church, in the judgment of all the divines at home, and in all the reformed churches in Christendom." Now that which I observe hence is, that Mr. B. is one, in his Catechism, where he labours with good conscience to instruct his people in the knowledge of God, and another, in his invective, headily begun, and unconscionably prosecuted. In the former he endeavoured with good conscience to lay down the grounds of Christian religion: but now considering that the Christian grounds there laid will not bear the antichristian confused building which he is to defend in his latter book, he chooseth rather to rase his former Christian foundations, and to lay new, and those contrary, than to leave one stone of Babel undaubed with his untempered mortar. Now for the point itself let the reader observe these few particulars.

1st. That 'rightly,' and 'truly' in preaching and administration, are by Mr. B. very ignorantly restrained to the holy graces of the church: for which, right and lawful persons by and to whom these administrations are to be made, are required. And are persons, graces, Mr. Bernard?

2. It is not true you affirm, that all divines hold the true Word, and true sacraments, though not truly nor rightly administered, the infallible tokens of the church. I do not remember that ever I read this phrase, the true Word, before, in any writers. Such as write of these things are generally against you, as you are against the truth. Your own articles of religion condemn you, which make it a property of the church to have the sacraments duly administered, Art. 19. And since the Word and sacraments are Divine ordinances instituted by the Lord for certain ends and purposes, and determined to circumstances of persons, as by and to whom they must be administered, it is necessary we measure and define them by the manner of ministration: otherwise we make them but as the charms of wizards, or at the best, as the prayers of papists, which they account true, if so many words be said over by whomsoever, or howsoever. The Word of

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God may be, and ofttimes is, in a great measure preached, or published upon a stage; and what if the sacraments should be added to it, were here a true church marked out? And as the Word and sacraments may be sacrilegiously usurped by them which are no church of Christ, nor have any right at all unto them, so may the true church of Christ be for a time without them, though never without spiritual right unto them; as in the time of some great plague, when the church dare not assemble; or of persecution, when it is severed either by bonds or flight. It doth not then cease to be a church, no, nor a visible church neither. It remains visible in itself though it be not actually seen, or open to the eye of all, as you speak, as colours are always visible, and sounds audible in themselves, though for the present they be neither seen nor heard. But what do I striving with this man, which needs none other adversary but himself? As he crosses his first book with his second, so doth he both cross, and confute his second by his third. In his first,* he will have the Word truly taught, and the sacraments rightly administered to be the marks of the true church: in his second,† the true Word preached, though not truly, and the true sacraments administered, though not rightly, are infallible tokens, and reciprocally converted with the church: in the third and last book,‡ the church may be a church without the use of the sacraments for a long time, as the church of Israel was in the wilderness, so it be not done of contempt; and such as are either no church of God at all, or an antichristian assembly, may have, and usurp the seals put to a blank, as Ishmael and Esau out of the church had circumcision, and the Papists now have baptism."

And that which he saith of baptism, may as truly be said in cases of the Word, and the publication of it by reading and interpretation. As the true church may for a time want the use of both, so may a false church usurp and abuse both, as well the writing, as the seal. He that held the seven stars in his right hand, and walked in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, threatened the

* "The Catechism." † "The Christian Advertisements."
‡ "Plain Evidences," page 286.

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church of Ephesus, that he would shortly remove her candlestick out of his place, for leaving her first love, except she repented, Rev. ii. 1, 4, 5, though she still held and used the Word and sacraments: and if a company of schismatics leaving a church without cause, or of excommunicates justly cast out of the church should unite themselves together, usurping and assuming the Word and sacraments, and professing the covenant outwardly, and in the letter, did this their bold usurpation make them a true visible church of Christ? The matter is, the true church may want upon occasion the use, or administration of the Word and sacraments, but never the right, power, and interest, in and unto them: so may a false assembly usurp or assume them, but never have right or power from Christ unto them. And this spiritual power, and liberty arising from the Lord's visible covenant, to communicate, and partake in the visible promises, and ordinances of it, is the true essential property of the visible church: as is the faculty of reasoning the property of a reasonable man, and the faculty of seeing, hearing, tasting, and the like, the property of a sensible creature; though neither the one have the actual use of reason for the present, nor the other of sense.

The third, and last property of the church Mr. B. makes "the care for the welfare of all, and every one for the whole, and each for other:" and "this either corporal for the maintenance of the body, as in alms-deeds, Acts ii. 42; or spiritual touching the soul, which standeth in admonition and exhortation, and so forth, as 1 Thes. v. 11," which also, he saith, they and their congregations have.

It is noted of some persons beside themselves, that all the ships they see in the haven, and fair houses in the country, they think and say, are theirs: when if they were in their right wits, they would both know and acknowledge, that they were poor, and beggarly, and had nothing. So is it with this man, because he reads in the Scriptures, that the apostolical churches consisted of saints; and were gathered by voluntary profession, into the covenant of God; that they had given them, and did enjoy by the Lord's gift and donation, his Word, sacraments, and other ordinances; and did in that holy com-

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munion, whereunto they were called, exercise themselves mutually for the welfare one of another, both bodily and spiritually: thereupon he concludes peremptorily that the Church of England, whereof he is, and for which he pleads, hath all these things: and that they have all these properties: when if he had a sound mind, and an honest heart in the things of God, he would both see and confess, that things were nothing less with them, than as he saith; and that instead of this great and universal abundance, whereof he boasteth, there were generally nothing but spiritual beggary, and want. "Thou sayest I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, and knowest not how thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Rev. iii. 17.

More particularly; as you want the office of deaconship, which Christ hath left by his apostles for the collection and distribution of the church's alms, and have entertained under the true name, a false and forged office of half priesthood, perverting and misapplying to the justification of it, such holy scriptures, as are left for the calling, and ministration of true and lawful deacons in the Church of Christ;* so is there not that care for the bodily welfare one of another amongst you in any measure, whereof you boast. The needless and endless suits, and quarrels amongst you filling all your courts and judgment seats; your daily thefts, and murders amongst the members of your church; the continual cozenings, and circumventions one of another; the usuries, oppressions, extortions, which overflow both country and city, as did the waters in the time of Noah both the valleys and hills, do too manifestly show how far you are from this care of the welfare each of other bodily, whereof you thus vainly boast. But though this care of each other, both bodily and spiritually, be almost wholly wanting, yet, say you, "the church is not to be judged a false church, no more than the household is to be judged a false household, because there is not that care that ought to be amongst them of the family: or a man a false man if that through folly, madness, or wilfulness, he neglects the welfare of his body."

* "Book of Ordination," Art. vi.

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Surely it had not need, considering how not only this is wanting, but how the contrary aboundeth in all places. And to let pass all other matters, no man is ignorant what care the two great factions in the church, that of the prelates, and the other of the reformists do take, each for other, namely, how each may subvert, and root out the other. And for your similitudes borrowed from an household, and a body, as we deny your church to be, Eph. ii. 19, and iv. 16, that household of God, or body of Christ, wherein every member hath his effectual working, in his measure, as the apostle speaketh, so is there no way the like reason of them and of the church, in the respect, wherein you compare them. A man doth not, nor cannot cease to be a true man naturally by any means, if his person survive: neither can a family cease to be a true family civilly, if it be not dissipated and dissolved: but a church though the same persons survive still, and combine together, as they did, may cease to be the true church of Christ: and may either become no church by forsaking all profession of Christianity, or a false church by holding and professing themselves still Christians, and in fellowship with God through Christ, when being considered by the revealed will of God, and testament of Christ, they are in truth and in deed, neither the one nor the other. And considering what John saith, 1 Epist. iii. 10, that he which loveth not his brother, and so, consequently, cares not for his welfare which issueth from the former, as the stream from the spring, is not of God, nor of his children, but of the children of the devil; and withal, that you yourself right now did place the form and covenant of the church in a great measure, in the manifestation and testimony of love in the members each to other, and so, consequently, of care each for the welfare of other, I see not how that church can be accounted the household of God consisting of his children by the Word of God, or the body of Christ united and coupled together of his members, by your own doctrine, where this love of, and care for each other is visibly and outwardly wanting.

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Power of Excommunication in the National Church.

But to pass over all other things, the point upon which Mr. B. insists, and which he would most gladly fasten upon the reader, is, that the power of the censures, and of excommunication, termed by the name of discipline, howsoever it be a thing necessary for the well-being of the church, yet is it no essential property, nor of such necessity, but that a true church may be without it. And this, wanting scriptures, or reasons to confirm it, he affirms again and again, and in the end, illustrates by a similitude taken from a man who is not therefore a false man, though he can neither see, nor go, nor speak.

It is recorded of one Theodotius, that having denied Christ in persecution, to lessen his sin, he went about to lessen Christ, and taught that he was mere man, and not God: so many, in the case of Christ's government, that their own and other men's sin may seem lesser, in not using, or submitting unto it, do labour to extenuate, and make it less excellent or useful than it is: and thereupon one tells us it is not a part of God's worship, nor of religion; another that it is a thing indifferent, arbitrary, and changeable; a third that it is not simply necessary for the true church: as Mr. B. in this place. The unsoundness of whose affirmation, and illustration, I will by and by manifest, the Lord assisting me; in the meanwhile I do desire the reader to observe with me these two things in his writings about this point.

The former is, that, in labouring thus earnestly to persuade, as here he doth, that the power of excommunication is not of simple necessity, he, in effect, grants that, which all men know to be true, namely, that the churches in England do want this power. Now if here he answer, as he doth in his 2nd book, page 261, that, though the power of excommunication be not in every parish, yet it is in the Church of England in which is comprehended all parishes, and all superior power over these parishes, in which is the power of Christ; I reply these particulars.

First, That he might thus answer, though one bishop alone had engrossed into his hands all this power; yea a papist might answer thus for the Pope's sole authority

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over all the churches in the world, yea though he should communicate the same with no other person, or persons.

Secondly, Let this man's shifting be well noted. When, both in this and the other book, he pleads for the ministry in the church, he passes by the national, provincial, and diocesan ministry, and speaks only of the ministry in some parishes, where some honest zealous preachers are, but now coming to plead for the power of Christ in the church, he takes the contrary course, and passing by the parishes, takes his flight to the national, provincial, and diocesan ministry there to find comfort.

Thirdly, The question here as he himself puts it, page 125 of this book, is about particular congregations, which, he saith, there are with them, having true matter, true form, and true properties, whereof excommunication is one. To this also add, that in the end of his book he avoucheth the minister's affirmation, page 180, that this power is given to the particular congregations in the land.

Fourthly and lastly, I have formerly manifested, from Matt. xviii. and 1 Cor. v. that this power and prerogative is given to a particular congregation, besides which the New Testament acknowledgeth none other visible church: and if that one particular church, or congregation at Corinth gathered together into the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, had the promise of his presence, and that he would be in the midst of them, and were by this power of the Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver to Satan, purge out, judge, and put away wicked men from among them, for failing in which duty, they were reproved by the apostle, then why not every other particular church or congregation of God's people, as well as that one? especially since that, as all other scriptures, was written for our learning; and that there is but one church, or body, as there is but one Lord: one, that is, in matter, form, and essential properties. Matt. xviii. 17, 20; 1 Cor. i. 2; v. 4—6, 12, 13; Eph. iv. 4, 5.

The second thing I desire may be noted, is, that Mr. B. doth, if not deceitfully, yet unfitly, comprehend the power of the censures under the care for the welfare of the church, page 126: since this power may be full and entire, where the case is either very little, or not at all: as it came to pass

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in the Church of Corinth, which had this power always amongst them, but neglected the use of it, and therein the care for the welfare of the church which they should have had, and for which neglect they were reproved by the apostle. 1 Cor. v.

Now for the similitude, I do except against it in a double respect: first for that God doth ofttimes deprive a man of the natural power of seeing, going, and speaking, by natural infirmities within, or bodily violence from without; but Christ never deprives his church of this spiritual power of excommunication, neither can it be impeached by any outward violence; only Antichrist exalting himself against all that is called God, and intruding himself into the throne of Christ, doth deprive the church of God, and of Christ, of this liberty, and power; and so all those churches, or congregations over whom he thus usurpeth, receive his mark, and are in that respect subject to his judgment. 2. Mr. B. as I have formerly observed, doth most unaptly compare the power of casting out offenders to the faculty of seeing, speaking, and the like: it is more fitly resembled to the want of power to void and purge excrements, which is prodigious in nature; and so neither the natural nor spiritual body so constituted can possibly consist or live. And for the parts of the body, to which he here hath reference, and the like; they do more fitly resemble the officers of the church, than the ordinance of excommunication: the eyes and mouth, the bishops and elders, which are to oversee and teach the church; the hands, the deacons, who are to distribute her alms. And as there may be a true, though an imperfect, natural body without these parts, so may there be a true visible church, or body of Christ, without these officers, though imperfect and defective.

Reasons for Excommunication in a true Church.

It now remains I lay down some reasons to prove the power of the censures, and of excommunication, simply necessary unto the church of Christ. The reasons are,

First, Because it is simply necessary for the being of a church, that there be power for true members to join together, and so to receive others unto them: even so

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consequently must there be power to disjoin, and cut off false members.

Second, Excommunication and absolution are of the same nature with preaching the gospel: yea, the very same, particularly applied to person obstinate and repentant, which preaching is in the general. The preaching of the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, Rom. i. 16: excommunication is the power of the Lord Jesus Christ, for the destruction of the flesh of him that is otherwise incorrigible, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. 1 Cor. v. 4, 5. The preaching of the gospel makes the first, or major proposition thus, "He that believes not, and repents not, is bound in heaven, and hath his sins unremitted:" but he that believes, and repents, his sins are pardoned, and he loosed in heaven. Now excommunication and absolution applied to a particular person and occasion do make the second, or minor proposition thus: thou believest not, or repentest not of this thy sin, and therefore thou art bound in heaven, and thy sins unpardoned: and so of absolution, or the loosing of sins. Add also unto these things, that the same bishops, or elders are to preach the gospel in way of doctrine, and to minister the censures in way of discipline, though in some diverse order, as I have formerly showed. And these two, being the two main duties of the ministers, comprehended under this general duty of "feeding the flock," Acts xx. 28; 1 Pet. v. 1, 2; 1 Tim. v. 17, must needs be of the same nature: both of them main and necessary parts of God's worship and of religion, and so to be performed upon the Lord's-day, as his work, and in the assembly of the saints, as an exercise of their holy communion; howsoever with you and others, they are made a consistory, and working-day matter, to the great violation and indignity of the kingdom of Christ, in the dispensation of it in his church.

Third, The want of excommunicating and censuring wicked men "leavens the whole lump," 1 Cor. v. 6; and makes the whole particular congregation whereof they are, accessory to their sin: and to purpose to continue in such a congregation, or church, as hath not this power, is to purpose to continue in disobedience to the commandment of the Lord Jesus

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which he hath laid upon all his disciples to "tell the church" in the order by him prescribed. Matt. xviii. 11, 15, 17.

Fourth, Without the censures, the church becomes of Sion, Babylon, even the habitation of devils, and the hold of all foul spirits, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird, Rev. xviii. 2. And so Mr. B. in his forenamed Catechism, page 15, 16, teacheth that the holy and right use of discipline and of excommunication serves to maintain the church, and to overthrow heresy, that destroys the foundation, and other mischiefs. And since heresy destroys the foundation, as Mr. B. teacheth: and that "there must be heresies" in the church, as Paul teacheth: 1 Cor. xi. 19: and that the church cannot possibly be purged of them, without excommunication; that must needs be absolutely necessary to the church, without which the church must absolutely and necessarily come to nought.

To these I do add, as a fifth, and last reason, that as the glory of God, and salvation of them without, are most furthered and advantaged by the holy conversation of the members of the church, Matt. v. 16; 1 Pet. ii. 12; iii. 1; Rom. ii. 24: and on the contrary most disadvantaged, and hindered, by their unholy and profane courses: so is the power of excommunication, by which solemn ordinance alone, profaneness and impiety are rooted out, of absolute necessity for the churches of Christ. And of this point I desire the reader to take knowledge, not only as a matter of truth, but of conscience also, and for practice.

Ninth Error.

That which Mr. B. reputes our ninth error, is our holding all their ministers, "false ministers."

As I have formerly said of your churches, so say I here of your ministers: that if one be false, all are: for all are of one constitution. Indeed, Mr. B., if he might be let alone, would save himself much labour this way, by restraining his defence to some few of the most able and conscionable men, excluding the rest: and therefore in his former book, pages 132, 133, he speaks of such ministers as God hath "furnished with gifts to discharge their function with holy graces: and a blameless life:" and in

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his second book, page 291, he desires to be understood of such as are sent of God, and set over congregations, according to the truth, and true meaning of the laws, and book of ordination. In which he doth directly exclude the archbishops, bishops, suffragans, deans, archdeacons, chancellors, commissaries, and with them, all pluralists, non-residents, unpreaching and profane ministers. For some of these are not set over congregations at all, but over provinces, and dioceses: others not in respect of their offices above named; and others, though they be set over particular churches, yet have they neither gifts nor graces for their function. But as he were nothing faithful unto a city, that undertaking the defence of it, should pick out, here and there, a corner most strong, and defensible, and fortify there, leaving the body of the city to the invasion and spoil of any that would assault it: so neither is Mr. B. faithful to the ministry of England, who pretending the defence of it against us, calls out here and there a man, whom he will justify, and leaves the body, and all the principal members of it, undefended.

And here I would demand of him why he doth not as well defend all the ministers, in this place, as he did even now defend all the people, or why a minister so called, though unapt to teach, and of a profane life, is not as well a true, though a bad minister; as a Christian so called, being ignorant, and of a lewd conversation, a true, though a bad Christian? There is one and the same reason of both: though Mr. B. have more reason for to plead the one than the other, considering his own standing. If he should plead for the ignorant and profane ministers, he should deprive himself of all arguments for the justification of the preaching, and more conscionable sort: for he raiseth them all, as the reader may see in both his books, from their gifts and aptness to teach, from their holy graces, their painful and zealous preaching, their suppressing of Popery, and conversion of souls, with other the like effects of the truths of the gospel published, and taught by them: which things since he dares not affirm of the scandalous and unpreaching priests, he cunningly passeth them by as some small mote fallen into the church, by the covetousness of "muck-wormly patrons," but contrary to

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the true meaning of the laws:* and without the least default of the bishops or archbishops: as though the covetous patrons could present them, except the ungodly bishops had first ordained them. If he had undertaken the justification, but as true though not as good, both of the unpreaching and preaching ministers, he must have sought and produced such arguments as would have agreed to both; but finding himself able to make no show at all for the ignorant, idle, and scandalous sort, having no colours to paint, no mortar to daub over those filthy stones, no, not to any show, he smothers all them, though far the greater both in number and authority, and indeed the almost only true formal ministers, according to the church canon and constitution, and presents to the reader a few dispersed, disgraced, tolerated, and tolerating persons, and undertakes their defence: manifesting himself a right natural "merchant of that great whore," in showing some handful of tolerable wares, thereby to deceive the simple buyer with the whole piece, or heap of rotten stuff, which goes with them. Rev. xviii. 11. Now on the contrary if Mr. B. should not have defended men of lewd conversation, as true visible matter of the church and members of Christ's body, he could not have justified with any colour, the national, provincial, diocesan, and parish churches, or any one of them, as true; since they were all at the first collected, and do still consist, for the greatest part, of such people, and so disposed. He therefore takes liberty unto himself to make such defence, and for so much of his church and ministry, as will serve his turn amongst the deceived multitude, and of no more.

Is Ability to Preach a Necessary Qualification for a Minister of the National Church?

But the main point in this place, and about this matter in hand, to be considered of, is, whether ability to preach be a qualification, and so preaching a work, necessarily required in the ministry of England, according to the true meaning of the laws ecclesiastical and civil, and the book of ordination. This Mr. B. takes for granted affirmatively,

* "Plain Evidences," pp. 290, 296.

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and upon it as a main ground builds his whole treatise about this matter; but I on the contrary do affirm, that this is, and so is known to be to all that mind it, with wisdom and good conscience, clean otherwise; and that neither this ability nor practice of preaching is of necessity required to the true and natural constitution of the English ministry, in the meaning of the laws established in that case.

And for the confirmation of that, I affirm, against this man's presumptuous asseveration, these proofs suffice.

First, The books of homilies published and confirmed by law, to be read of such ministers as cannot preach, do evidently declare, that ability to preach is not necessarily required of all, in the true meaning of the law.

Second, By the statute law of the land, and in particular by one statute enacted for the prevention of unworthy ministers, though, wanting the book, I cannot set down the title, time, or order of it, he that is either a bachelor of arts in one of the universities; or can give an account of his faith in Latin; or hath been brought up in a bishop's house, though he have been his porter or horsekeeper; or hath a gift in preaching, is capable of orders, and may be by the bishop ordained a minister; so that by the express letter, and plain meaning of the law, aptness and ability to teach is not necessarily required in the English ministry. If he have any one of the three former qualifications, the law approves of him; and being ordained, the patron may present him to any congregation in the land, whom the bishop also must institute, the archdeacon induct, and the people receive; and may be thereunto compelled, whether they will or no.

Add unto these, that your canons and constitutions, framed by the convocation house, and confirmed by the king's royal assent, and so being the laws ecclesiastical of your church, and by your doctrine, Mr. B., p. 144, the act of all the church, though the inferiors come not to consent, do not only approve an unpreaching ministry, but also lay deep curses and anathemas upon all that deny either the truth or lawfulness of it. To this also I might annex that it is a very common doctrine with your prelates, and their

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chaplains, and faction, that "preaching is no necessary annexum, or appurtenance unto orders,"* which they also offer to defend against all gainsayers.

But it seems you have special reference to the book of ordination: let us therefore see what it makes for you, or your purpose. That you build upon, I know, is these words of the bishop, when he orders his priest; and delivers him the Bible in his hand; "Take thou authority to preach the Word of God, and so minister the holy sacraments in this congregation, where thou shalt be so appointed." The words I hear, and acknowledge, but the true meaning of the book I deny it to be, that every minister should be able to preach. It may as well be said, it is the meaning of the book, that every priest should be ordained in the particular congregation, where he is to minister, because of the latter words "in this congregation, where thou shalt be so appointed:" and that he is to minister the discipline of Christ, as well as the doctrine and sacraments, because such words pass betwixt him and the bishop in another place of the same book. It is not the least delusion of Satan or mystery, that such forms of good words are retained both in the Romish and English church, without any truth either of purpose or practice in those which use them: for by them the eyes of the simple are easily bleared by such deceivable merchants, as right now I spake of: though it be not without a special providence of God, that these, and the like forms of words should be used, for the more full conviction, and condemnation of them that choose to be deceived, as I have formerly noted in this book.†

To conclude this point. The reading of the service-book, in form and manner, the celebrating of marriage, churching of women, burying of the dead, conformity and subscription, are more essential to your ministry, and more necessarily required by the laws of your church both civil and ecclesiastical, than preaching of the gospel is. The wearing of the surplice, and signing with the cross in baptism, are of absolute necessity, without partial dispensation, yea, I may add violation of oath by the bishops: whereas preaching of the Word is no such necessary or

* Mr. Collins. † Vide page 79, *supra*.

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essential duty, but a work casual, accessory, and supererogatory, which may be done or undone, as the minister is able, or willing, without any such absolute necessity, as is here pretended. Hereupon then it followeth, that since the preaching of the gospel is no necessary part or property of the office of ministry, in the Church of England, that that ministry cannot be of Christ: as also that the conscionable and effectual preaching of some men is no justification at all of the office, which may and doth consist essentially without it, and to which it is but casual and accidental; but a commendation of the persons, which, besides the natural, and necessary parts of their office, do so practise and preach. And this consideration alone might suffice for answer unto all Mr. B.'s proofs for the legitimating of the ministry in the Church of England: yet will I for the further discovering of them, considering the confidence wherewith he propounds them, descend to the particulars..

In his former book, page 131, he lays down, and proves by the Scriptures, these three sound and main grounds touching the ministry. 1. "That the Lord only ordains offices in his church." 2. "That he distinguisheth them one from another, that one may not intrude into another's office." 3. "That he only prescribes the duties to be done in every distinct office," and so in the fourth place he comes to the qualification and gifting of men for their functions, and so proceeds to other particulars. But observe his dealings: when he comes to apply, and compare the ministry of England to and with these golden rules, and by them generally and truly propounded, to justify it in the particulars, he passeth them all by in silence, as if he had utterly forgotten them, and speaks not one word, either of the offices themselves, or of the distinction of them one from another, or the duties to be done in them, page 141; but comes in the very first place to the gifts and graces of the persons.

And in so doing, like the unrighteous steward, he doth wisely, though nothing less than faithfully. He knows well, that he cannot find in the Scriptures the least colour for the offices of archbishops, bishops, suffragans, deans, archdeacons, half-priests, or English deacons: nor that

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the duties of celebrating marriage, purifying women, burying the dead, reading the service-book in manner and form, are laid upon the ministers of the gospel, as duties to be done in their offices, nor that the provincial and diocesan officers may intrude into their office, which are set over particular congregations, and deprive them of the power of government; nor the deacons to administer the sacraments: nor that any of them may intrude into the office of the civil magistrate, as they all do less or more, in meddling with matters of marriage, divorce, testaments, or with injuries, as they respect the body, or outward man, according to your and other men's exposition of Matthew xviii., making ministers, magistrates; and elders in the church, elders in the gates. These things he knew, and therefore coming to speak of the ministry in England, and to apply these general rules to their particular estate, he not so much as once mentions either the diversity of offices in the church; or their distinction one from another: or the several duties to be done in them, lest in naming them, he should, as it could not have been otherwise, have condemned that thing, which he would so gladly justify. And this I desire the reader to note not only against him, but specially against the ministry he pleads for.

The English Clergy not Mass Priests?

His arguments to prove the ministers of England true ministers of Christ, follow in order.

The first is because they are not ministers of Antichrist: and that he would prove by four reasons. 1. By their doctrine, and oath against him. 2. Because they show no obedience unto him. 3. Because Antichrist himself disclaimeth them, as no ministers, and condemneth them, as heretics. 4. Because Antichrist's ministers are sacrificing and massing-priests, which they are not.

Here Mr. B., had he done faithfully, should have cleared our arguments, by which in sundry treatises, published for that purpose, we have proved them in respect of their offices, entrances, and administrations, the ministers of Antichrist: but thinking it easier to strike, than to fence, he passeth by what we have written against them, and

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lays down certain colourable reasons for them: which I have summarily set down in order: and unto which I return this answer.

First and generally, That there is one common error in all his arguments: namely, that there is no Antichrist, but that great Antichrist, the pope: as though there were no more devils but Beelzebub, because he is the chief of the devils. I would know of this man, what he thinks of the clergy in King Henry VIII.'s days, that took the oath of supremacy, and taught against the pope, opposing him, and being opposed by him: or what he thinks of the Lutheran ministers, that disclaim the Antichrist of Rome as heretical, and are disclaimed by him, and yet do abhor from the reformed churches, and from all communion with them, for the main truths they hold, touching the sacrament and predestination? The thing then is, that there are degrees of Antichristianism, and orders of Antichrists, that is, of such as are adversaries unto Christ. In Paul's time that man of sin, and adversary was got into the temple of God, 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4: and in John's time many Antichrists were come into the world, 1 John ii. 18; iv. 3: and yet there was then neither pope, nor mass priest; no, nor diocesan or provincial prelate neither. There was indeed Diotrephes, who sought for pre-eminence, 3 John 9, 10, and to rob the church of "the power of Christ," 1 Cor. v. 4, and so was an Antichrist, as there were many other impugning Christ the Lord otherwise: but the great Antichrist of Rome was by many degrees and long continuance, to be advanced to his throne. And as there were lesser Antichrists before him, by which he entered: so are there also after him; and those left behind him in the Church of England, out of which he is driven. And those are the lord archbishops, and lord bishops, with their orders, and administrations: unto whom whilst the inferior ministers do swear canonical obedience, they do by oath promise obedience unto Antichrist, and receive his mark: and so ministering, are the marked servants of Antichrist, whom they obey: whom they are also by doctrine to defend, except their oaths and words disagreed. From whom if any of them do withdraw this their bounden and sworn obedience, by denying subscription unto his orders,

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or conformity unto his ceremonies, them he silences, suspends, and deprives as schismatical, if not heretical, and utterly unworthy of their and their church's service. And these things the reader may apply to Mr. B.'s three first several reasons.

Is Romish Ordination Valid?

Now to your fourth and last argument, viz.: that you are no mass priests, my answer is, first, that you have the same office with mass priests, though reformed of that massing, and some other impieties: and this both the practice of your church, and your doctrine, pleading for succession, and ordination from Rome, and Romish bishops, do necessarily confirm. All the mass priests ordained in Queen Mary's days for that end, were upon their conformity to the orders, then continued ministers in their several congregations, in Queen Elizabeth's days, by virtue of their former ordination. And so are such mass priests at this day, though ordained at Rome, received and continued amongst you, upon the aforenamed conditions. Now it is your own constant affirmation everywhere, that ordination makes the minister. Whereupon it follows, that no new ordination, no new minister, but the old mass priest reformed of such impieties, wherein Rome exceeds England. 2. It is your doctrine in your first book, that the ministry makes the church, and gives denomination unto it: and in your second book, that the Church of Rome is a true church: whereupon it followeth necessarily, that the ministry in the Church of Rome is a true ministry: except a true ministry can make a false church. And if any order of ministry be, it is that of the parish priests, for they are the likest the pastors in their several charges. Whence I do also conclude, that since the Romish priest's office is a true office though under corruptions, as it was true Job overshadowed with boils, either the English priests must have the same office with them, though with the boils cured, or else they are not the true ministers of Christ. And for the name priest, at which, you say, we catch, you do idly draw it from the Greeks, since it is most evident, that with the office, the name was translated unto

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you from the Latin, and Romish church: their *sacerdos* being your priest in your books of ordination and common prayer, which you have from them: otherwise why do you not turn the Greek words *presbyter*, and *proistamenos*, priests, in your English Bibles, which are translated from the originals?

The sum of the second argument is that the ministers of the Church of England are pastors, and teachers, that is, good shepherds, such as do keep, feed, and govern the flock; and as are qualified with gifts and understanding, and instruct them that are unlearned.

If instead of pastors and teachers, you had put parsons and vicars, your writs of presentation, and institution would have proved it. But that you are pastors, and teachers, such as Paul speaks of Eph. iv. by holy writ you can never manifest. Second, Though the things were true you speak both for your power, and practice, yet except you administered those things by a lawful calling, in a lawful office, and to a lawful assembly, you were not true pastors and teachers. But it is not true you say of yourselves that you play the good shepherds in feeding, that is, in providing pasture for the sheep, and in governing and ordering them to and fro, and at it. Your prelates govern or rather reign, but teach not: your parish priests some of them that can and list, teach so much as they dare for fear of their imperious lords, but govern not.

Your third argument for your ministers is, that they are called and sent of God, and of his church, and therefore are true ministers. Their calling and sending of God you make his preparing of them with gifts and graces to be able to execute in some measure the office, whereunto he doth appoint them. But herein you are greatly mistaken: the Lord's enabling men with gifts is one thing, and his calling them to use them in such and such an order, is another thing: and though the Lord calls none but he enables them, yet he enables many he never calls. Many counsellors, judges, lawyers, and others in the land, are very able to discharge the office of ministry, but are not called thereunto of God; if they be, it is their sin not to obey the heavenly calling, and to become ministers. And as a man may be qualified with gifts for the ministry, and

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yet not called of God to use them, so being qualified accordingly, he may be a true minister of the church, though he be never called of God at all, as we now speak. So was Judas, who was never inwardly called of God, that is, persuaded by the work of God's Spirit in his heart, in the zeal of God's glory and love of the salvation of men, to take upon him the office of an apostle. And what true calling of God, the ministers in the Church of England have to take upon them their offices and charges, as they do, appears in their easy forsaking them upon a little persecution, yea before it come near them. Of which more hereafter.

Now for the calling of the ministers by the church, albeit we put off the more full handling of it to the fourth argument, yet something must be said for the present.

And first, Though it were true you say, that the Church of England were the true Church of Christ, yet were not your ministers called, and sent by the church, except a lordly prelate be the Church of England, for by such a one is every minister amongst you called and made. Second, I deny here, as always, your national church to be the true visible Church of Christ: and that which in this case, you say, is largely proved, I hope is sufficiently refuted.

But here a demand you make, in your answer to Mr. Smyth, page 313, must be satisfied, namely, why true ministers may not arise as well out of a false church, as a false ministry out of a true church? The latter I agree unto: for the church may err, and through error or otherwise, choose a man incapable of the ministry by the Word of God. Whereupon it follows, that the minister makes not the church, as you erroneously affirm, for then the church should in the very instant become a false church when she sets up a false minister. But your inference I deny. For first evil may arise from good, though by accident, without any external cause coming between: as sin did from the angels in heaven, and our first parents in paradise: but so cannot good from evil. Second, the officers are 1. of; 2. by; 3. in; and 4. for; the church. 1. Of it, as members of the body, and so must be members of a true church, before they can be true officers. 2. By it, in respect of their calling, as Gal. i. 1, and therefore, except they can either be true officers by

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a false calling, or that a false church can give a true calling, they cannot be true in it. 3. In it, as the accidents, or adjuncts in the subject, without which being true, they can have no more true existence, than reason can have, without a reasonable soul, or subject. 4. For it, and therefore since the Lord hath appointed no ministry for a false church, there can, by the Word of God, be no true ministry in it: and this I wish them to consider, which still adhere to the Church of England, though they wholly dislike the constitution for the ministry in it.

Now where you add, that Luther and other worthy ministers of Christ were raised up out of the Romish Church, you wrong him and them, and the truth in them, whilst you would gratify Rome and England. Luther's ministry from Rome was his friardom: and is a friar, a true minister of Christ by his office, or of Antichrist whether? Besides, look what ministry the Church of Rome gave him, it took from him: and lastly if he had been a true officer or minister of the Church of Rome, it had been sin in him to have left his charge. Touching the baptism received in the Romish Church I have formerly spoken; and of our retaining it, but not our ministry, I shall speak hereafter.

That, which is worthy consideration in the fourth argument is, the entrance into the ministry: in the substance of which he tells us, there is nothing wanting by their laws. For touching the ability, and desire to teach, and other graces he speaks of, they no more make a minister, than courage, the fear of God, true dealing, and the hatred of covetousness make every man a magistrate, that is so endowed. Exod. xviii. 21. Now this entrance he lays down in four particulars: 1. presentation, 2. election, 3. probation, and 4. ordination with imposition of hands. But these, in such confusion, and with so many contradictions, as do evidently show what monsters an ill cause, and a vain spirit meeting together, will gender and bring forth. First, In his former book, page 136, he places the whole calling, or as he speaks, the making of a minister in ordination: and comprehends under it as the three parts of it: 1. examination; 2. election; 3. admission, with imposition of hands. In his second book, he makes ordination but the fourth and last part of his calling, page 295, as

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indeed it is, and the same with admission: the reason why he would thus advance ordination is, because that in England it is all in all, being done by a bishop, yea, though it be by the Bishop of Rome. And so they call their book they make ministers by, the book of ordination, not the book of election, or choice, or calling of ministers. The bishop's lordship swallows up the people's liberty: and if he but lay his hands upon a man, and bid him receive the Holy Ghost, he is a minister of the church sufficiently ordered.

Second, Where in his former book he puts examination, or probation before election: in his second, he would have election first, and the probation, or trial of the party's gifts and graces to come afterwards: misinterpreting that, which is written 1 Tim. iii. 10, of probation to be made before election. And the reason of this I conceive to be, because the ministers in England are not only elected but fully made, before any such trial be taken of them. But I come to the particulars: and first to that which he calls presentation: for which he quotes Acts i. 23; vi. 6. In which scriptures, especially in the latter of them, he is much mistaken: the presentation there spoken of not being before, but after election. The cause, I suppose, of this his confused writing, is the confused practice in his church, where the patron presenteth his clerk both after his choosing, and ordaining. But for the thing itself, understanding by presentation the nomination of the person to be chosen, or considered of for choice, as the officers are in all other things to go before the people, so in this ordinarily: provided always the brethren's liberty be not infringed, but that they may present, or nominate others, if any amongst themselves seem more fit.

Now for the examination and trial of the party's gifts and graces, as we all know what it is in the Church of England, where if a man have the gift of subscription, conformity, and canonical obedience, though other gift or grace he have none, he is a tried minister, and so reputed: which if he want, be his other gifts and graces never so eminent, he is neither to enter into, nor being entered, to continue in his ministry: so do the things, which you write

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in your former book, pages 137, 138, touching this trial, and examination of men, before they be chosen into the ministry, notably condemn both the ministry of your church which you labour to justify, and on the contrary justify sundry practices amongst us, which elsewhere you condemn as notable errors.

The particulars are these,—1. That the gifts of him that is to be chosen, must be examined according to those things, which the place within he must be, requireth, and God hath commanded. 2. That the place or office of the ministry consisteth principally in the preaching of the Word, administration of the sacraments, and prayer. 3. That the first, namely the preaching of the Word, is to be preferred in the first place, as being first imposed, Matt. x. 28, 29, and most necessary both to beget and preserve a people. James i. 18. 4. That the knowledge, zeal, and utterance of the party to be elected must be examined. Whereupon these things follow. First, That, by your own own grant, men out of office may preach, administer the sacraments, and prayer; and so exercise their gifts, and graces of knowledge, zeal, and utterance. But as there is some difference, in the respect in hand, between the sacraments on the one side, and the Word, and prayer on the other; because there is no special gift required for the administration of them, as there is for the latter: so is the exercise of prophesying and prayer out of office, so much impugned by you, undeniably justified by this your own position. And as it is a very presumptuous evil to call any man into the office of a teaching elder, whose gift in teaching hath not been sufficiently tried out of office, so is it no less presumption in a church to set a man over herself for government of whose both ability, and faithfulness in the reproving and censuring of sins, and in other public affairs of the church, she hath not taken good trial.

2. If this be true, that the office of the ministry consists principally in the preaching of the Word, and administration of the sacraments and prayer, how is that true, for which you have so much contended in the former part of your book, page 94, that the authority to censure

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offenders, is in the chief officers, and governors of the church, as their special prerogative? Can a less principal work be the peculiar privilege of a more principal office? It is against the light of nature, and common reason.

More particularly: this observation by you truly made, with that also which followeth, namely, that the preaching of the Word is to be preferred in the first place, overthrows the order both of the prelacy and priesthood of your church. For if the preaching of the gospel be the principal work of the ministry, and to be preferred in the first place, then are not your provincial and diocesan bishops of God, which have betrayed the principal order and office in your church for a less principal work, namely government; and are preferred to the highest and first place, not for teaching of their dioceses and provinces, which were impossible, though they desired it, but for ruling of them. You say they are the successors of the apostles: but the chief work of the apostles' ministry was the preaching of the gospel, not the ruling, much less lording, wherein your bishops' office standeth. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Acts v. 42; vi. 4; Rom. i. 15, 16; 1 Cor. i. 17. The order which the Apostle Paul hath left, is, that those elders, which labour in the Word and doctrine, should have special honour, and be above them which are employed in ruling, 1 Tim. v. 17: but this order Antichrist hath subverted, as being a course not only too base and laborious, but even impossible for him to honour his ministers by, as he desired, and hath affected; and hath procured not double, and treble, but an hundred fold greater honour to be ascribed to ruling and government, than to preaching. And this is not the least part of that confusion wherein you stand, and against which we testify. 2. If the office of ministry consist principally in preaching, how can your office of ministry or order of priesthood be of Christ, which consists not at all in preaching, as I have showed, but may stand without it, by the canons and laws of your church: not requiring it necessarily, as any essential property for the being, but only admitting of it, as a convenient ornament for the well-being: commending indeed the person that useth it, but no ways justifying the office, which

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requireth it not. Yea, most evident it is, that the ministry of the church of England, considering it not only in the state and carriage of things, but specially in the civil, and ecclesiastical laws wherein it is founded, consists more principally in the wearing of a surplice, than in the preaching of the gospel.

To conclude this point, as the examination of such with you, as are to be ordained, by the bishop and his chaplain, is no trial of their gifts of knowledge, zeal, or utterance, or that they are apt to teach, 1 Tim. iii. 2, but a device like the posing of schoolboys, without either warrant from the Scriptures, or good of the church: so the only examination which the Word of God approves of, is that just and experimental knowledge which the church, by wise observation, is to take of the personal gifts and graces of such men as the Lord raiseth up amongst them, manifesting themselves in the public exercises of the church, in their places, as there is occasion; though you, Mr. B. be bold to abuse, 1 Tim. iii. 7, to the justification of your letters testimonial unto the bishop, which any ungodly person may procure from other persons as ill as himself, and thereby may find acceptance with some bishop or other, as evil as either of both. The apostle Peter directing the disciples, or church about the choice, or nomination of one to be chosen into the room of Judas, tells them they must think of such a man, as had companied with them all the time, that the Lord Jesus was conversant among them. Acts i. 15—21.

And the same apostle, together with the rest, by the same Spirit directs the church, afterward, to choose from among themselves seven men justly qualified, to take upon them the administration of the church treasury. Acts vi. 2, 3. And upon the same ground it was that the apostles, Paul and Barnabas, did not straightway upon the gathering of the churches of the Gentiles ordain them officers, but a good space after, even when the people had made good proof and trial of the gifts and faithfulness of such men as by their free choice, and election, the apostles ordained over them. Acts xiv. 23. And whom doth it concern so nearly to make proof, or to take observation of them that are to be called into office, as them that are to call, or

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choose them, and to commit their souls unto them? Of which election it followeth, we consider in the next place.

And the first thing I purpose about it, is to sum up, and set together a few of Mr. B.'s sayings, which like so many waves driven by contrary winds, do dash themselves asunder one against another.

First, then, he affirmeth, pages 133 and 138, former book, that the church is to separate, and choose from amongst others, for ministers, such as are found fit: and in so saying, what doth he but grant that the church is before the ministers? They that choose must needs be before them that are chosen. How then do the ministers make the church? 2. In his second book, page 325, he reproacheth Mr. Smyth, as an impudent gainsayer of the text, for saying that the church did elect Matthias, Acts i. 26, where the Lord did make the choice; and yet in the same book, pages 295, 296, he grants, that such examples of practice were then in use for the people's choosing ministers; and quotes this very scripture, with some others for that purpose. 3. He affirmeth in his former book, page 138, that the guides, and governors of the church were to choose the officers, and allegeth to that end Acts xiv. 23. Neither remembering what he had formerly written in the same book, page 97, namely, that the rest of the congregation were to choose the principal to be their mouth, and to stand for the whole church; nor yet caring what he was to write in his second book, page 295, to wit, that the people were to choose their ministers, for which he also bringeth the same scripture, Acts xiv. 23. If this man had been in John Baptist's place, the Jews might well have answered Christ, that they had gone out to see a reed shaken with the wind. Luke vii. 24.

The Choice of Ministers in the People.

But to leave his contradictions of himself, and to come to his oppositions against the truth.

And first, it is erroneously written by him, page 138; and the scriptures, Acts xiii. 1, 2; xiv. 23, sinfully perverted to the justification of his error, "that by the church, which is to choose officers, is meant the guides, and governors thereof." That which I have formerly noted out

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of both his books, especially his quoting the latter of these scriptures for the people's liberty in choosing their ministers, doth give great cause of suspicion, that in this case he thus writes for his purpose, against his conscience, and is indeed condemned of himself. And for the other place, which is Acts xiii. 1, 2, I may as justly, yea and much more, reprove Mr. B. for bringing it for the governor's choosing of Paul and Barnabas, as he Mr. Smyth for bringing Acts i. for the people's choosing of Matthias.

For first, Barnabas and Saul were apostles, as well as Matthias: and therefore not to be called to their office by man, but by God, Gal. i. 1, and so were of the Holy Ghost as immediately separated by name, as was Matthias by lot. Acts xiii. 1, 2; i. 24, 26.

2. Matthias was, at that time, first called to the office of apostleship, which before he had not: but Paul and Barnabas were apostles long before, and, at that time, designed only to special work, but not called to any office. Acts ix.; 1 Cor. ix. 1, 2, 6.

3. It appeareth that Paul and Barnabas were not separated, and sent by the governors only, but by the church with them, wherein they ministered, and which joined with them in prayer, and fasting, and so consequently in dismissing, or letting them go, ver. 2, 3, though most like the ceremony of imposition of hands was performed only by the teachers and prophets, but with the foregoing consent of the church, according to the express direction of the Holy Ghost. And that, not the governors severally, but the church with them, separated and sent them, under the Lord's express nomination, appears evidently, Acts xiv. 27, where upon their return, they made relation, not to the officers, but to the church gathered together for that purpose, what things the Lord had wrought by them, that so not only the grace of God towards the Gentiles might be taken knowledge of, and magnified, but also that their service, and ministration might be approved to the church, which sent them.

And thus all may see how injurious this man is to the right and liberty of the brethren, as formerly in the censures, so here in the choice of officers; making the governors alone the church, both in the one and the other.

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And being both of them church matters, and parts of the public administration of Christ's kingdom, the same scriptures which demonstrate the people's interest in the one, do conclude the same in the other.

In the beginning, the Lord Jesus, and his apostles by his Spirit, appointed none other true visible churches, but particular congregations of faithful people; for of the vanity of representative churches in the New Testament I have formerly spoken; but as knowledge puffeth up, 1 Cor. viii. 3, so within a few ages, the officers and governors of the church, being men of knowledge, began to swell with that poisoned humour of pride and ambition, wherewith Antichrist had infected them, especially when they were once settled in peace and plenty; and taking withal, partly advantage, by the people's negligence in themselves, and superstitious admiration of their guides; and partly occasion by the abuse of their liberty, have been bold to engross the liberties of the whole church into their own hands, and with them, the name. They alone must have the keys of the kingdom of heaven hanging at their girdle, for the opening and shutting of heaven's gates: which is all one as if in plain terms they should affirm, that to them alone were committed the oracles of God, the gospel of salvation. See Rom. iii. 2; Jude 3. They alone must speak in the church to edifying, exhortation, and comfort, 1 Cor. xiv. 3; and so all the brethren must be silenced in the exercise of prophesying. To them alone must the complaints of sins be brought, and they alone must be heard in the reforming of them: and thus must the bottomless gulf of the governor's authority swallow up the brethren's liberty in the reproving, and censuring of offenders. They alone are to separate, and choose the ministers; and of this branch of the power of Christ amongst the rest, must the body of the church be stripped. And as there is no end of errors, where they once begin, especially of those which tend to the advancement of the man of sin in his ministers above all that is called God, so hath this iniquity prevailed yet further, even to the bereaving of the people of the cup in the Lord's Supper, and of the very Scriptures in their mother's tongue: the priests alone communicating in both parts of the Supper; and

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inclosing the Scriptures themselves within the Romish, or Latin language, which they alone, to speak of, understood.

Yea, to conclude, so effectual hath the delusion of Satan been this way, that it hath been universally taught, and believed, that an implicit faith was sufficient in the lay people, and that no more was required of them than to believe, as the church (that is, the guides, and governors of the church) believed, though they were utterly ignorant what their faith was. And what less in effect doth Mr. B. affirm in his second book, page 145, where he writes, that if the chief do voluntarily receive, profess, and proclaim a faith, or religion, it is to be accounted the act of all, though the inferiors come not to consent? He might as well have added, though they be ignorant of it, or what it means. Yea, doth not this conclusion follow upon the former ground, that the officers are the church, Matt. xviii., for the reproving and censuring of offenders, and for the binding and loosing of sins? If the officers be the church for one religious, or spiritual determination, why not for another? And if the censures agreed upon and ministered by the officers, be, by way of representation, the censures of the church, without the actual consent of the people; why is not the faith agreed upon and published by the officers the faith of the church, by way of representation, before the people's distinct knowledge of it, or actual consent unto it? Put the case the officers change their ancient faith in some main point, wherein the body of the church still abideth, and so differeth from them; and that they take occasion to excommunicate some brother, or brethren, that most opposes them: if this excommunication of the officers be the excommunication of the church representatively, without the people's consent, then is this new faith also of the officers, for which this excommunication is practised, the faith of the people, notwithstanding their not only not consenting unto, but their utter dissenting from the same.

Now as the governors did thus engross the power, and liberties of the church, so no marvel, though with them, they assumed the name. Hence is it that they alone are called the church, the clergy, the spirituality, page 197:

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the profane idiotish laity are excluded both from the title, and thing. Simon the saddler, Tomkin the tailor, Billy the bellows-maker must be no churchmen, nor meddle with church matters. As though it were either not true, or to no purpose, which is written, that Christ himself was a carpenter, Paul a tent-maker, Peter, Andrew, James, and John fishermen. Mark vi. 3; Acts xviii. 3; Matt. iv. 18, 21.

One only thing more I will add, and so conclude this point; which is, that the priests were not more eager at the first upon the people, till they had swallowed up their liberty, than they were afterwards one upon another, till one had gotten all; from whom, as from the Catholic visible head, all power should issue, and be derived to the several parts of the body. And how clean a way Mr. B. and others, which knowing better have the more sin, make to this mischief in pleading that Paul alone, 1 Cor. v., and the several angels alone in the several churches, Rev. ii., iii, were to reform and censure abuses, let the wise reader judge.

The second allegation made by Mr. B. against which I except, is, that the ministers with them have all things in substance required by the Word of God for their making, as presentation, election, examination, ordination, with imposition of hands; and that the exceptions we take are but about circumstances only, and some manner of doing: which do not make a nullity, or falsity of the deed done.

As we do except against the very office itself, and against the main and most principal works of it, by law required, as works of will-worship, and voluntary religion, Col. ii. 23; so do our exceptions against the very calling, and entrance of your ministers evince them sufficiently not to be the true ministers of Christ. No man man takes this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as Aaron. No, Christ himself took not this honour to be made the high-priest, but he that said unto him, Thou art my son, this day begat I thee, gave it him. Heb. v. 4, 5. And if Christ the Lord of his church did not take upon him the solemn administration of his office, till by the Father he was called thereunto from heaven, it is great presumption for any man, and he a bold usurper, that so

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practiseth, to take upon him any office in the church, not being chosen and called thereunto by them, which under the Lord, have received this charter, thus to call ministers, which are only his church, and people.

By this doctrine of Mr. B., that failings in "circumstances and manner of doing, make not a nullity or falsity of the deed," it should follow, that if a company of Papists, Arians, Anabaptists, or of any other heretics, or idolaters should choose, and call a minister, thongh it were a child, an idiot, yea a woman, and that after the most profane and superstitious manner that could be, yet this made no nullity, or falsity of the action, for all were but errors in circumstances, and manners of doing. Yea, by this trifling, murder, adultery, and all the mischiefs in the world might be defended. If a private person should take upon him without lawful authority to be a judge, and should condemn the innocent, and justify the guilty person, all the evil were but in the circumstances of persons judging, and judged. If a man gave his body to the wife of another man, the evil were but circumstantial, he might have done it to another person, namely his own or proper wife. What confusion would these excuses of circumstances only, and manner of doing things, bring over all estates, if they were admitted of? Of this mischief I have spoken, pages 21, 22, 23, 39.

The third consideration in this matter is about such devices, as Mr. B. hath found for the shifting off such places, as prove that the people ought to choose their ministers. The scriptures are Acts i.; vi.; xiv. 23, to which also might be added Numb. viii. 9, 10; Acts xi. 22; 1 Cor. xvi. 3; 2 Cor. viii. 19, with many others. His answer is, first, that these places testify, that such examples of practice were then, but that there is no precept for the perpetuity of it.

This is an ungodly evasion, making the commandments of God of none authority by men's traditions: and tending to the abolishment of the testament of Christ, which he hath confirmed by his death: wherein he hath not only by practice, but also by the doctrine of the apostles, upon which he hath founded the church or temple of God, for ever, established this ordinance, as a part of the New

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Testament, Matt. xv. 6; Heb. ix. 15—17; Eph. ii. 20, 21: and that not upon some extraordinary, temporary, and changeable occasion, as some things have been ordered, and decreed by the apostles, Acts xv. 1, 2, 28, 29, but upon ordinary and constant grounds, and upon reasons, and causes of perpetual equity; such as concern all churches in all places to the world's end: as shall appear hereafter.

When the Lord Jesus sent forth his apostles to gather churches, he gave them in charge "to teach them to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them," promising withal that in so doing he would be with them alway until the end of the world. Matt. xxviii. 20. And that, amongst other doctrines, they taught the people this, that they were to choose their officers, the scriptures cited do fully testify. See Acts i. 15, 16, 23; vi. 2, 3, 5, 6; xiv. 23. Answerable unto this is that which the apostle Paul protesteth to the elders of Ephesus at Miletus, that he was pure from the blood of all men, in that he had kept nothing back, but showed them all the counsel of God, Acts xx. 17, 20, 26, 27: one part of which counsel was, that the people were to choose their officers, which by Mr. B.'s own grant they observed: to which also add, that the same apostle, writing unto the church of Corinth, about a matter of order, avoweth the things which he writes, to be the commandments of the Lord: and chargeth all them as wilfully ignorant, which do not so acknowledge them. 1 Cor. xiv. 37, 38, 40. With what conscience then, or colour of reason can this man say, that this power, and right of the people to choose their ministers, was only a matter of practice, but not of precept? and no immediate right from Christ, but a grant unto them from the apostles, or upon their exhortation for the time?

It is true he saith, in the same place, page 296; first, that the people did not elect, or choose, but when the apostles were amongst them; and second, that they did it upon their exhortation. And for the first who denies, but that where faithful and godly officers are, the people are by their direction, and government according to the will of Christ, to use their liberty in this, and all the other affairs of the church? So for the second, it was so the apostle's exhortation, as it was also a divine institution by the Spirit of God, never reversed but by those "unclean spirits of

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devils, which like frogs came out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet," Rev. xvi. 13, 14; part of the counsel of God, never altered, or departed from, but by them, which take counsel, but not of God, Isa. xxx. 1; and lastly, one of the commandments of Christ, which the apostles were bound both to teach, and exhort the people to observe, never disannulled, but by the counter-command, craft, and violence of Antichrist; who as one of your own prelates hath truly observed, never ceased, till by cursing and fighting, he had gotten all into his own hands. The insinuation therefore which you make against us in affirming this liberty unto us, as a right of ourselves is unjust: considering we have it conveyed unto us from Christ, in the writings of the apostles, wherein they do as expressly teach it us, and as effectually exhort us unto it, as if they were personally present with us. And that which the people might then do in their presence, upon their speech, they may now do upon their writings, in their absence, and in the absence of all other officers also, if the particular churches be for the present unfurnished of them.

Now where he further addeth, that "the people then were very judicious, and able to make a choice, whereas it is now far otherwise with many:" it is of some consideration for the people, and Church of England, but of none at all for the people, and church of God. If the people in the parish assemblies there should usurp this power, it would be far otherwise with them indeed, for the most part, than with people judicious, or able to make a choice. Can blind men judge of colours, or natural men of spiritual things? 1 Cor. ii. 14. If a man would prophesy unto them of wine, and strong drink, he were a prophet for such a people. It is certain they would choose ministers like themselves, ignorant, and loose fellows for the most part, and the saying of the prophet would be verified, "As is the people, so is the priest." Hos. iv. 9. And yet worse than are made, and chosen by the bishops, and patrons generally, they could hardly find. But observe yourself, Mr. B., when you plead, page 110, for the ignorance, and profaneness of your own people, you write that the apostles received into the churches persons very ignorant, and of lewd conversation. Now when you come to plead, page 114, against the

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liberty of the people of God, you make them in the apostles' times to have been very judicious, and able to discern of things, far otherwise than the people now are.

Now for the exception itself, it is of no value. But as the ordinances, and administration of the Jewish Church, remained the same, and unalterable, though the people's knowledge were not always the same, but sometimes greater, sometimes less: so is it in the estate of the New Testament with all them which deem that Christ, the Son, is worthy of as much honour in his ordinances, as was Moses, a servant of the house in his. Heb. iii. 3. And if this device were admitted of, that the liberty of the people should ebb, and flow, according to the measure of their knowledge, then should not all the brethren in the same church have the same Christian liberty in the choice of officers, censuring of offenders, and the like ordinances; for all have not the same measure of knowledge, nay it may be scarce two of all; so diverse is the dispensation of grace to the several members. Then should scarce two several churches in the world enjoy the same Christian liberty, the one with the other; no nor any one with itself, any long time, since one church differeth from another, yea, from itself at divers times, in the measure, and degree of knowledge, and other graces of God. Besides, if we should weigh together in the balances, the churches of Christ now, and in the apostles' times, the Christian liberty of the people would rather sway the balance this way, than the other way, and to the people now, than in the apostles' days.

For first, there were present with the people in those first times, besides other extraordinary officers extraordinarily endowed, the apostles themselves, those great master-builders, which, if any other in the world, might lawfully have deprived the people of their power in this and the like cases: which notwithstanding they did not, but on the contrary did faithfully inform, and direct them according to the commandment of Christ, in the right, and lawful use of the same. And yet notwithstanding the bishops of the Romish, and English Church, though not worthy so much as of the name of daubers in the Lord's house, in comparison of those other master-builders, dare without fear, or shame, engross all into their own hands;

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and have their proctors, this man and others, many a one, to plead for them in their usurpation.

Second. The churches in the apostles' time were newly converted from Judaism, and Paganism, and had still cleaving unto them much ignorance in many great points. And in particular, the disciples, or church at Jerusalem, after they were both possessed, and had use of this power of choosing officers, were ignorant of no less a point than the calling of the Gentiles; of which, or the like main ground of religion, no true church of Christ now is ignorant, as that church then was. And thus it appeareth, that the choice of officers by the people in the primitive churches was not a matter casual or of the apostles' courtesy, but a commandment of Christ, left penned by the Holy Ghost, as is the rest of that story, and of those acts of the apostles, for our direction, and the direction of all the churches of Christ to the world's end. Acts i. 6; x. 14, 15, 34, 35; xi. 2—5, &c.

Patrons.

One shift more, Mr. Bernard makes, page 319, second book, from which he must be put, and that is, that "the patron chooseth for the people a fit man, whom the bishop finding fit by examination, ordaineth, and that this is a lawful calling."

To let pass, that the patrons usually choose not for the people, but for themselves, and their own profits, and pleasures, which though it be apparent to all men, is, not without cause, winked at by the bishops, considering how, and by what means they procure their own choice, I answer first, that the patron doth not choose for the people, that is, as the people did choose in the apostles' times. For the people then made choice of such, as were before private persons, but by their election, to be ordained into office: where the patron chooseth a clerk, who is in office already, and ordained by the bishop before the patron make choice of him. The bishop doth at the first make him a minister at large, and not of any particular church, and so sends him, as it were, to graze upon the commons, till afterwards he be found by, or rather find, some patron, which by his presentation makes a gap, and lets him into some vacant vicarage,

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or parsonage, there to minister accordingly. But admit in the second place, that the patron stood in the room of the people to choose for them, I would demand, who set him there? or where the Scriptures do either teach or approve of any such attorneyships in the matters of religion, and of God's worship, as you make by telling us, in one place, that the officers do make profession of faith; in another, that they censure offenders; and here, that they choose ministers for the people. If some one man in a parish had entailed to him and his heirs for ever, the power of appointing husbands to all the women in the parish, the bondage were intolerable, though in a matter of civil nature: how much more intolerable then is the spiritual bondage of the parish assemblies under the imperious presentations of those lord patrons, whose clerks they must receive, and submit unto, whether they will or no? Great is the sin of the people, which lose this liberty, Gal, v. 1; greater of the patrons, which engross it; but the greatest of all, is that for the ministers, which by their doctrine, and practice, confirm both the one and the other in their iniquity: all three conspiring together in this, that they alter the ordinances, and commandments of Christ by his apostles, and so both diminish of his institution, and add of their own device. Deut. iv. 2; Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

Now as the forenamed scriptures, like a gracious charter given to this spiritual corporation, the church, by the king thereof, Jesus Christ, do clearly plead the people's liberty, and power of the choice of their ministers, so I will add unto them certain reasons, to prove this order, and ordinance to be of moral, and perpetual equity.

Reasons for Choice of Ministers by the People.

The first is, because the bond between the minister, and people is the most strait, and near religious bond that may be, and therefore not to be entered but with mutual consent, any more than the civil bond of marriage between the husband, and wife.

It makes much both for the provocation of the minister unto all diligence, and faithfulness: and also for his comfort in all the trials, and temptations which befall him in his ministry, when he considereth how the people, unto whom he ministereth, have committed that most rich

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treasure of their souls, in the Lord, yea, I may say, of their very faith, and joy, to be helped forward unto salvation, to his care, and charge, by their free and voluntary choice of him. Acts xx. 28, 29; John x. 9, 12, 13; Acts vi. 1—5; 2 Cor. i. 24.

It much furthers the love of the people to the person of their minister, and so, consequently, their obedience unto his doctrine, and government, when he is such a one, as themselves in duty unto God, and love of their own salvation, have made choice of: as on the contrary, it leaves them without excuse, if they either perfidiously forsake, or unprofitably use such a man's holy service, and ministration.

Lastly, it is agreeable to all equity, and reason, that all free persons, and estates should choose their own servants, and them unto whom they give wages, and maintenance for their labour, and service. But so it is betwixt the people, and ministers: the people a free people, and the church a free estate spiritual, under Christ the king; the ministers the church's, as Christ's servants: and so by the church's provision to live, and of her, as labourers to receive wages. Rom. xv. 31; 1 Cor. ix. 14; 2 Cor. iv. 5; 1 Tim. v. 18.

Do the Clergy preach the Gospel?

Thus much of the fourth argument. The fifth followeth, the sum whereof is, that, "Because the ministers of the English assemblies, teach true, and sound doctrine in the root, and fundamental points of religion, they are therefore the true ministers of Christ." And that sound doctrine is the trial of a true minister, Mr. B. would prove from these scriptures, 1 Tim. iv. 6; Jer. xxiii. 22.

Of the unsound doctrine of your church, and that more specially in the fundamental points of religion, others* have spoken at large formerly, and something is by me hereafter to be spoken; for the present therefore this shall serve, that, since Christ Jesus, not only as priest, and prophet, but as king, is the foundation of his church: and that the visible church is the kingdom of Christ; the doctrines touching the subjects, government, officers, and

* Vide an answer to Master H. Jacob his Defence, &c. by Francis Johnson, 4to. 1600. Pp. 46—48, 157, 158.

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laws of the church, can be no less than fundamental doctrines of the same church, or kingdom, 1 Cor. iii. 11; Matt. xiii. 11, 19, 24, 31, 33; xxi. 5, 43; Acts i. 3. Which how unsound they are with you, appears in your canons ecclesiastical composed for that purpose. Which if your ministers preach, they preach unsound doctrine, and strike at a main pillar of religion, viz. the visible church of God, which is the pillar, and ground of truth, as the apostle speaketh, 1 Tim. iii. 14—16: if not, then are they schismatics in, and from your church, whose solemn doctrines they refuse to publish.

Now because Mr. B. everywhere bears himself big upon the sound doctrines taught by the ministers in England, and in this place brings in two scriptures to warrant their ministry upon this ground, let us a little consider of the scriptures, and of the intent of them, and what verdict they give in, on his side. In the one place, the prophet Jeremiah, chap. xxiii. 11, reproves the priests and prophets, for not dealing faithfully with the people, in laying before them their abominations, and God's judgments due unto the same, that so they might have turned from their evil ways, and from the wickedness of their inventions, ver. 22; but for flattering them on the contrary, in their iniquities, and for preaching peace unto them, for the strengthening of their hands in evil, ver. 14—17. Now if the ministers in England be measured by these men's line, they will appear to lie level with them in a great measure.

For first, the greatest part of them by far, declare not the Lord's word at all unto the people, but are tongue-tied that way, some through ignorance, some through idleness, and many through pride. And of them which preach how many are there mere men-pleasers, flattering the mighty with vain, and plausible words, and strengthening the hands of the wicked; and with profane and malicious spirits reviling, and disgracing all sincerity in all men: adding unto these evils a wicked conversation, by which they further the destruction of many, but the conversion of none. And lastly, for those few of more sound doctrine, and unblamable conversation, let these things be considered.

First, they are reputed schismatics in the Church of England, and are generally excommunicated, *ipso facto*, and

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so will appear to be, to any that compare their practice with the ecclesiastical laws of that church.

Second. They do with these sound doctrines mingle many errors; yea, the same things which, in the general, they teach, and profess, they do, in the particulars, but specially in their practice, gainsay, and deny.

Third. As they declare the Lord's will unto the people but by halves, and keep back a great part of his counsel, which they know is profitable for them, and wherein they would walk with them, were it not for fear of persecution, so are they ready to be silenced, and to smother the whole counsel of the Lord, and not to speak one word more, in his name, unto the people upon their lord bishop's inhibition: which, were they persuaded in their consciences they were sent of God, I suppose they durst not do. Of which more in the seventh argument.

Now for that in 1 Tim. iv. 6, if the doctrine of the ministers agree with the doctrine, and practice of the church, they will appear liker to them, of whom Paul speaks, ver. 3, than to Timothy, ver. 6. If it be said, that the Church of England, forbid not marriage, and use of meats absolutely, but in certain respects; I answer, no more doth the Church of Rome, but to certain persons, and at certain times: against whom notwithstanding all Protestants do apply this scripture: and so doth the Church of England forbid them; though more sparingly, as good reason the daughter come something behind the mother, as marriage to fellows in colleges, and to apprentices, and to all at certain times, especially at Lent: during which holy time, the eating of flesh is also forbidden, and abstinence commanded, and that in imitation of Christ's fasting, for our sakes, forty days, and forty nights; and that for a religious use, namely, the subduing of the flesh unto the spirit, for the better obedience of godly motions in righteousness, and true holiness, as the collect for the first Sunday in Lent witnesseth.*

But admit the ministers of England taught soundly in all the main points of religion, as I acknowledge some do in the most, yet did this no way prove them true ministers of Christ, that is, lawfully called to true offices in the church.

* Book of Common Prayer.

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In what main point of religion, as you value points, could Korah be challenged? and yet he was no true priest of the Lord, but a usurper of that office, Numb. xvi. 10, 11; as on the contrary, they were true priests, in respect of their office, Jer. xxiii. 11, who deceived the people, here, and everywhere, as the Scriptures manifest. So that both he, which is no true minister of Christ, may teach the main truths of religion: and he also that is a true minister, may err greatly, and yet not presently cease to bear both the place, and name of a true minister of Christ. Otherwise all ministers are popes, that cannot err.

To end this argument, Mr. B. in both his books would have probation, and trial to be made of a man's gifts, and graces before he be admitted into the ministry. And not only he, but Paul himself amongst, and above the rest, requires, aptness to teach and ability to exhort with wholesome doctrine, 1 Tim. iii. 2; Tit. i. 9: and as this gift must be in him, so must it be known to be in him, before he can be lawfully called into the ministry: and this Mr. B. affirms expressly, and that by the exercise of this gift, his knowledge, zeal, and utterance, is to be manifested. Whereupon I conclude that, if trial by sound doctrine must be made of them, which are no ministers at all, as indeed it must in the exercise of prophesying, then cannot sound doctrine be any sufficient trial, that is proof, or argument, of a true minister.

On Success in the Ministry.

The sixth argument for the justification of the ministers in England, is, "God's ordinary, and daily assistance of them in their ministry, for the working men's conversion unto the Lord."

God forbid I should either deny, or make doubt of the effectual conversion of men unto salvation in England, neither doth Mr. Ainsworth say, as you charge him in your second book, page 298, that none are converted by you: but he shows, first, how you contradict yourselves, in saying that you convert men to God, and yet affirm, that the same persons before their conversion, were true Christians: and secondly, that considering the swarms of graceless persons, wherewith all your parishes are filled, you

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have more cause of blushing, than of boasting this way. But this I deny, that the conversion of men unto God is a sufficient argument to prove a true minister of Christ: that is, to prove a lawful calling into a true office of ministry, according to Christ's Testament. It is most evident, that whosoever converteth a man unto God, that person doth in truth and in deed minister the Word of God, and the Spirit by the Word, and so may be said to be sent of God; but that every one whom God so honoureth, (though never so ordinarily,) should therefore be a true church officer lawfully called to public administration, which is the question betwixt Mr. B. and me, is most untrue and contrary both to many scriptures, which show that men in no office may, and to much experience, which shows they do convert and save sinners. And if only officers may convert unto the Lord, to what purpose should private persons exhort, instruct, and reprove any upon any occasion whatsoever? Lev. iv. 22, 23, 27, 28; xix. 17; Matt. xviii. 15; John iv. 39; Acts viii. 40; xi. 19—21; 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25, James v. 19, 20.

But here I am driven to take upon me the defence of them whom Mr. B., page 299 of his second book, challengeth for cavillers, upon the same ground he challengeth Mr. Ainsworth for deceitful dealing, page 304 of the same book.

Mr. Ainsworth denies that qualification with good gifts is a proof of a lawful minister. "Herein," saith Mr. B., "he severs deceitfully things to be conjoined," for this reason, with the rest in my book, shows who is a true minister. In like manner, we except against his sixth argument, and affirm that others, besides ministers, do convert men to God; and that therefore conversion argues not a true minister. This is cavilling, saith Mr. B., for both these and others may convert: and again this is but one reason but there be more besides, which are sufficient to prove our ministry.

And is it cavilling in us, or ignorance in you thus to speak? You do acknowledge, page 304, that qualification with good gifts is a reason amongst the rest to show a true minister: and page 298, you make the conversion of men a distinct argument to prove the same thing. And know

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you not, that every sound reason or argument must prove, or argue, of itself, the thing for which it is brought? Many reasons, indeed, or arguments may be produced to prove one, and the same thing: and so for further confirmation, may follow one upon another: but so as every one of them severally be of force to prove the thing in question, otherwise it is not worthy the name of a reason, or argument, but is a mere sophistication. Either therefore, Mr. B., bring such arguments as will of themselves evince that they are brought for; and then reckon them up by sevens as you do here; or by twenties if you will, as elsewhere you do; or else cease to abuse the reader with a multitude of maimed proofs as your custom is.

Now because the conversion of men to God is much urged by the ministers, and much stood at by many well-minded people, as indeed both in equity and good conscience, men are to respect the instruments of God's mercy towards them, I will enlarge myself in this point, further than otherwise I would.

And first, for the two scriptures, Rom. x. 14, 15; 1 Cor. ix. 2, quoted in both your books, Book 2, page 308, from the former of which you conclude, that because you "so preach, as people thereby do hear, believe, and call upon God," you are therefore sent of God.

Let the reader here observe, that the apostle in both these places speaks of the conversion of heathens and infidels to the faith of Christ, as were the Romans and Corinthians before the preaching of the gospel unto them: and so let him demand of Mr. B. whether the ministers in England have had the same effect in their preaching unto the people there, with them that preached unto the Romans and Corinthians, and brought them by preaching from infidelity to believe in God? If they have, then were the people infidels before, and without faith, and so are the rest not thus effectually converted by their preaching: if not, how then stands the comparison, or proportion between the effect of their ministry then, and theirs in England now? or what argument can be taken from these effects compared together?

In the general, I confess, there is a proportion, and so in that general and large sense, wherein Mr. B., page 313,

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expounds the word "sent," or "apostle," I do acknowledge many ministers in England sent of God: that is, that it comes not to pass without the special providence and ordination of God, that such and such men should rise up, and preach such and such truths for the furtherance of the salvation of God's elect in the places where they come. They which preached Christ of envy, and strife, to add more afflictions to the apostle's bonds, were in this respect sent of God, and therefore it was, that the apostle joyed at their preaching. Phil. i. 15, 16, 18. How much more they that preach of a sincere mind, though through ignorance, or infirmity, both their place and entrance into it be most unwarrantable! Joseph's brethren, the patriarchs, did of hatred and envy sell him into Egypt; and yet the scriptures testify, that God sent him thither. Gen. xxxvii. 4, 8, 11, 28; Acts vii. 9; Gen. xlv. 5, 7, 8; Psa. cv. 17. And the same God which could use their malice, by which he was sold into Egypt, for the bodily good of his people there; even he can use the power of Antichrist, by which the ministers in the Church of England have their calling, for the spiritual good of his people there. And yet neither the secondary means of Joseph's sending, nor of the ministers' either entry or standing, anything at all the more warrantable.

The other scripture is 1 Cor. ix. 2, of which I have spoken something formerly, and others much more: and in which, for the avoiding of ambiguity, I consider these two things: first, what the apostle purposeth to prove: and second, the medium, or argument by which he proves his purpose.

Touching the former, it is evident, his purpose is to prove himself an apostle, in the most strict and proper sense, howsoever Mr. B. trifles, page 321, contrary to the false insinuations of his adversaries, which bare the churches in hand against him, that he was only an ordinary minister, or at least, inferior to the apostles, and had his calling, and other ministrations, from and under them: as appeareth 1 Cor. ix. 1; 2 Cor. x. 16; xii. 12; Gal. i. 1, 17—19; ii. 6—9.

The argument to prove this, which he also calls the seal of his apostleship, and his work, Mr. B. makes, the Lord's

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effectual working by his ministry, in the conversion of souls unto God.*

Touching which his affirmation, I desire first to know whether this conversion of the Corinthians by Paul were to sanctification of life, yea, or no? If he say no, he gainsays the apostle, and his testimony of them: who, writing unto the church at Corinth, confesseth them there to be sanctified in Christ Jesus, and saints by calling, 1 Cor. i. 1; and again advertising them, that neither fornicators, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor railers, nor extortioners should inherit the kingdom of heaven, he testifieth of them, that such were some of them, but saith he, "Ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." 1 Cor. vi. 9—11. Besides, if Paul's work were not the work of sanctification upon the Corinthians, how will Mr. B. raise his argument for the ministers in England, from their work of sanctification upon the people there? If on the other side he say, that the conversion by Paul's ministry was unto sanctification, he contradicts himself in his own distinction of double conversion, page 307 of his second book, where he allows unto the Romans, Corinthians, and Ephesians, only the primary conversion, which is to the profession of Christ, but not the secondary, which is to sanctification of life.

In which his distinction, as he idly imagines a true conversation without sanctification, so doth he highly detract from the apostle Paul, as if he had not converted men to sanctification; or had gathered churches of persons unsanctified outwardly, and in the judgment of charity.

2. How can the simple conversion of men prove both Mr. B. an ordinary minister, which he would be, and Paul no ordinary minister, but an extraordinary apostle, which he would be?

3. If converting be a sign of a true minister, then are both the bishops in England and the ministers in the reformed churches, true ministers: for without doubt, some of both have been instruments under God of men's conversion: but that is impossible, considering how the ministry of the one, wheresoever it comes, eats up and

* Christian Advertisements, &c., p. 120. Plain Evidences, p. 321.

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destroys the other. Yea, then should both the ministers of England and we here of the separation, (who have, as Mr. B. truly answers Mr. Smyth, renounced our ministry received from the bishops, and do exercise another by the people's choice,) be true ministers of Christ: for as they there avouch this work of conversion, so have we also here been made partakers of the same grace of God: and found his blessing even that way upon our ministry also.

4. As it was the most proper work of an apostle to convert heathens to the Lord, and in Christ Jesus to beget them through the gospel, and so to plant churches, not rejoicing in the things already prepared by others, but to preach the gospel, even where Christ had not been named: so is it on the other side the pastor's work to feed them that are already begotten, converted, and prepared: and therefore the apostle Paul comprehends the whole pastor's and elder's duty under the feeding of the flock, all and every part whereof he avoucheth, in the judgment and evidence of charity, to be purchased with the blood of Christ. 1 Cor. iv. 15; iii. 6; 2 Cor. x. 16; Rom. xv. 20; Acts xx. 17, 28. And what is a pastor, but a shepherd? and over what flock is a shepherd set, but over a flock of sheep? and who are sheep, but they which have laid aside their goatish and swinish nature? which till men have learnt to do, they are rather swine and goats, than sheep, and so are they which keep them, rather swineherds and goatherds, than shepherds.

But here two exceptions made by Mr. B., in his second book, page 308, must be satisfied. The former is, that, the pastor is to feed such little ones as are born in the church: the other, that he is to reclaim such unto sanctification, as fall to wickedness.

To the former exception I do answer. First, that Paul in the place in hand, raiseth no argument at all from any work upon the little ones born in the church of Corinth, but upon the men of riper years, whom he turned from idolatry to the true God. 2. Even little ones born in the church, may in their order, and after their manner, be said to be converted, or turned unto the Lord, or born again, which are all one: otherwise being by nature children of wrath, born in iniquity, and conceived in sin, how could

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they be reputed holy? Eph. ii. 3; Psa. li. 5; 1 Cor. vii. 14. Yea, how could they possibly be saved, or enter into God's kingdom? John iii. 5. And since you grant, Mr. B., that the pastor is to feed those little ones, do you not therein acknowledge they are converted, or born anew? In the preface of your book you would have men begotten after they were born: and here you will have them fed before they be born. Now for those little ones, as we are to repute them holy in regard of the Lord's covenant, and do therefore set his seal upon them, so are their parents even from their cradle to bring them up in instruction, and information of the Lord, Eph. vi. 4: and so to prepare them for the public ministry: unto which if they in their riper years give obedience in any measure, they are so to be continued in the church: if otherwise, they are in due time, as unprofitable branches, to be lopped off, and so cease to be of the pastor's charge.

Secondly, for men falling into wickedness in the church: if they continue obstinate and irreclaimable, then are they in order to be censured, and so the pastor is discharged of them: if on the contrary, God vouchsafe them repentance, this cannot be called a conversion of them to sanctification, but a restoring, or recovering of them out of some particular evil, or evils, into which, through infirmity, they are fallen. Gal. vi. 1. So that the doctrine stands sound, for anything that Mr. B. hath said, or that either he or any other man can say, that the pastor's office stands in feeding, not in converting: as also that Paul's seal, and work, was not the bare conversion of the Corinthians, but their conversion from heathenism, plantation into a church, and these with the signs of an apostle, even signs, and wonders, and great works. 2 Cor. xii. 12.

Lastly, That the simple be not deceived, and either give honour where it is not due, or give it not where it is due, let them consider, that the conversion of a man is no way to be ascribed to the order or office either of apostles or pastors, but only to the Word of God, which by the inward work of the Spirit is the power of God to salvation, to them that believe: it is the law of the Lord, that converts the soul. The Word of the kingdom is that good seed, which being sown in good ground prospereth to the bringing

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forth of fruit to life, whether he that sow it be in a true office, or in a false office, or in no office at all. Rom. i. 16; Psa. xix. 7; Matt. xiii. 19, 23. And though it be true, which Mr. B. saith in his former book, page 130, that the ministers in England do preach as public officers of that church, yet doth their office confer, or help nothing at all to the conversion of men. It is the blessing of God upon the main truths they teach, not upon their office of priesthood, which converts: which truths if they taught without their office, either before they were called to it, or being deprived of it, would without doubt, be as effectual, as they are, yea, and much more, by the blessing of God; as appears in this, that such amongst them as make least account of their office formally received from the prelates, are the most profitable instruments amongst the people: where on the contrary, the professed formalists, cleaving unto their office and order canonically, are generally unprofitable either for the conversion or confirmation of any to or in holiness.

To conclude then, the turning of men unto holiness of life, is no justification of your office of ministry, or calling unto it, but of such truths as are taught amongst you: which all men are bound to hold, and honour, as we also do: though we disclaim the order, and power, in and by which they are ministered.

Properties of True Shepherds.

The seventh and last argument Mr. B. takes from certain properties of true shepherds, laid down, John x. which he also affirmeth the ministers of the Church of England have: the first whereof is, that they go in by the door Jesus Christ, that is, by his call, and the church's, which, as he saith, he hath proved at large.

In so saying he speaks at large: let him prove, that the bishop, or patron, or either of them, is in Christ's place set by him to choose ministers: or that they are the church, to which he hath committed the power of calling and choosing them, and answer the reasons brought to the contrary: otherwise his large proving will appear but a large boasting: and he will give men occasion to remember the proverb, "It is good beating a proud man."

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The second property wherewith he investeth them, is, that the porter openeth unto them: by which porter Mr. Smyth means the church, for which Mr. B. reviles him out of measure: making the porter, invisibly, God's Spirit; visibly, the authority committed by the church unto some for admitting men into the house, the church of God, which, saith he, is a sensible exposition according to the custom with us, and in Judea.

As there are many true ministers, in respect of men, which enter not in at all by the Spirit of God, or any motion of it, as it was with Judas, and is with all hypocrites, who for by-respects take that calling upon them: so is Mr. Smyth's exposition making the church the porter far more probable than yours, who make the porter the authority of the church committed to some, for the admission of men. Is not the porter a person, rather than a thing? And, who that hath but common sense, will not rather by the porter understand the person or persons having authority, than the authority which he or they have? And if you, Mr. B., had but remembered, what you write of the properties of the church, pages 237, 238, making as here you do, the porter, or authority of the church, a property of a shepherd, you would, I suppose, in modesty have forborne the charging of Mr. Smyth to have his brains intoxicated by his new ways, and to be maddened by his own phantasies in religion, for writing in this point, as he doth. And for the thing itself, it is evident, that Christ Jesus is properly the shepherd of the sheep, here spoken of: and that therefore the authority of the church can be no porter for his entrance, or admission. I do therefore rather think, that by the porter is meant God the Father, whose care and providence is ever over his flock, who therefore hath called and appointed his Son Jesus Christ to be that good shepherd, who gave his life for his sheep. John x. 2, 11. And if you will apply this to ordinary pastors, and their calling, then sure by the porter must be meant such as have received this liberty, and power from Christ by the hands of his apostles, for the choosing and appointing of ministers, which I am sure, of all others, are not the Romish or English bishops. Christ would never have the wolves to appoint his sheep, their shepherds.

The third property of good shepherds which you chal-

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lenge to yourselves is, "that they call their own sheep by name, that is, they take notice of their people, of their growth in religion, and do abide with them, diligently watching over their flocks; as by true and faithful promise made in the open congregation they be bound in their ordination."

It must here be observed, as before, that Christ speaks only of himself properly; for of him only it can be said, that the sheep are his own: the people are very improperly called the minister's sheep: and Christ saith not unto Peter, Feed thy sheep, but my sheep, John xxi. 15—17.

2. To take your own exposition, Mr. B., how can your prelates, whom, in the sixth argument, you make shepherds, call their sheep by name, or take notice of, and watch over their whole diocesan and provincial flocks? Yea, if yourself or any one amongst you, take notice of your people, as the flock of Christ, and of their growth in religion, they take notice of that which is not. I speak of the flock, though I doubt not but there are some sheep straying from the right fold, in your herds. Of the abiding of your ministers with their flocks, we shall speak hereafter: only this in the meanwhile, that considering how many flocks you yourself, Mr. B., have forsaken, methinks you should have forborne, in wisdom, to make this one property of a true shepherd.

A fourth property of a good shepherd, you say, you have, which is, "to lead forth your sheep, viz., from pasture to pasture, from milk to strong meat," &c.

There are many fair and wholesome pastures in the field of God's Word, into which you do not lead your sheep, no, nor so much as point to them with the finger: neither indeed dare you, because they are hedged in with human authority, your statutes and canons ecclesiastical. Nay all your care is to keep your people from the knowledge of them, lest they should break through those thorny hedges, at which you stick.

The fifth and last property for which you commend yourselves, is, your going before the flocks, that is, in godly conversation.

As I acknowledge the unblameable conversation of many amongst you, so do many Papists, Anabaptists, and other vile heretics and schismatics, walk as unblameably this

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way, as you; and yet are they not true shepherds of Christ's sheep. But by the shepherd's going before the sheep in this place is meant, as I take it, partly the care of the minister in governing the people; partly, his constancy in danger, to which he exposeth himself in the fore-front; and in these respects, he is said to go before the flock. Now full ill do these properties agree with the ministers for whom Mr. B. pleadeth; who as they govern not the people at all, but are themselves and the people with them under the government of their diocesan and provincial pastors, so do they in the time of danger most perfidiously forsake their flocks: wherein their sin is the greater, considering the faithful promise, which you yourself testify, they make in the open congregation, diligently to watch over their flocks.

Now, however, that which hath been spoken will appear, I doubt not, sufficient to force Mr. B. from this xth of John, yet because he deems it "so strong an hold for him, as we cannot overthrow it," page 302, we will adventure a little further upon it, and see whether there be not to be found in it, sufficient of the Lord's munition, not only to batter the wall, but even to rase the foundation of the ministry of England for which he pleadeth.

First then, all true shepherds are set over flocks of sheep to feed them. John xxi. 15—17; Acts xx. 17, 25, 29. But the ministers in England were not set over flocks of sheep, but indeed over herds of swine, goats, and dogs, with some few sheep scattered amongst them; which the wild and filthy beasts push, worry, and defile. Therefore the ministers of England are not true shepherds.

2. True shepherds enter in by the door, Christ, ver. 2, 7, that is, by the means, which his apostles, at his appointment, have commended unto the churches, Acts vi. 2, 3, 5; xiv. 23. But the ministers in England enter into their charges by the presentation of a patron, the institution of a prelate, and the induction of an archdeacon, which is not the door opened by Christ, for the shepherd to enter by, but a ladder set up by Antichrist whereby to climb over the fold.

3. The shepherd is by his office to feed and govern the flock, as Mr. B. himself, page 192, testifieth from this scrip-

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ture. But as feeding, that is, teaching, or preaching unto the people, as is his meaning, is no part of the parish priest's duty, but a casual and supererogatory work: so are they altogether stripped of government, and therefore no true shepherds of Christ's flocks.

Lastly, The good Shepherd seeing danger towards the sheep, will rather give his life than flee; where on the contrary, the hireling seeing the wolf coming, fleeth, because he is an hireling, ver. 11—13; whereupon it followeth, that the ministers Mr. B. chiefly means, leaving their flocks upon the bishop's ungodly suspensions and deprivations, as upon the barking of a wolf, do evidently proclaim to all the world, that they are no good shepherds, but hirelings. And so far am I persuaded of hundreds amongst them, that, I doubt not, but if they thought in their hearts, they were by Christ's appointment set in their charges, and by him commanded there to minister, they would never so foully, as they do, forsake their flocks upon the suspension or deprivation by a profane prelate, or chancellor, for refusing conformity or subscription to their popish devices.

When David was in his greatest trials, and that his enemies laboured most, either to frustrate, or deprive him of his kingdom, and so to turn his glory into shame, his comfort was, that God had set him, as his king upon Sion, the mountain of his holiness: and that the Lord had chosen, or separated him unto himself. Psa. ii. 6; iv. 2, 3. Likewise when Jacob was in that great both danger and fear of his brother Esau, the thing that sustained him was, that God had said unto him, Return unto thy country, and to thy father's kindred, and I will do thee good. Gen. xxxii. 9.

And as it was with these two, so is it with all the servants of God both in their general and special callings. When they have assurance by the Word and Spirit of God, that he is the Author of their calling, then do they with patience, and comfort of the Holy Ghost, suffer such trials, and afflictions, as are incident thereunto: where on the contrary, wanting this assurance, they are soon discouraged even in the good things they do, if persecutions do arise; and being without the Lord's calling, no marvel though they want his comfort.

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The apostle Paul advertiseth the elders of Ephesus, that they are made overseers or bishops of the flock, by the Holy Ghost, and thereupon takes occasion to exhort them to all vigilance and faithfulness against the invasion of such wolves as should enter in to devour the flock. Acts xx. 27—29. Now if those men of whom I speak be persuaded that they are placed in their charges by the Holy Ghost, how do they forsake them not being by him displaced, or do they think the Holy Ghost displaceth them for their well-doing, or for their refusing to do evil, as to subscribe, conform, and the like? They speak of the seal of their ministry, and of their inward calling, and of the people's acceptation, and of many things more, very plausible to the multitude; but in the day of their trial, it appears, what small comfort they have in all these: and as is their coming in, so is their going out: since they entered not in by the door, no marvel though they suffer themselves to be thrust out by the window, or to be tumbled over the wall, or otherwise to be discharged upon some small and slight occasion.

"But suppose," say you, Book 1, page 142, "a false entrance, yet that no more disannuls the ministry, than doth a faulty entrance to marriage disannul that ordinance between two conjoined to be lawful man and wife."

But first, I deny your very office of ministry in itself to be a spiritual ordinance of God, as is marriage a civil ordinance.

2. If one of these two persons were incapable of marriage, there would follow a nullity: and so is it with you, where your parish assemblies are all of them incapable of the ministry of Christ, and the ministrations thereof.

3. If this marriage were made without the free consent and choice of the one party, were it not to be disannulled? And this is your case, if you consider it, where the minister is put upon the people, without their free choice and election.

Lastly, If two persons were married with this condition, that they should leave one another upon the imperious command of some great man, for some small and slight matter, or other; were this true, and lawful marriage? And is not this the estate of your ministers, and people

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under their imperious lords, the prelates? by whom they are in continual danger of divorce, for want of canonical conformity in some trivial and trifling ceremony.

Thus much of this similitude, as also of this matter.

On Apostolic Succession.

That which comes next into consideration, is the point of succession: wherein, in the first place, answer must be given to a demand made by Mr. B. in his 2nd book, page 311, in which many others also think there is much weight: and that is, why we hold and retain the baptism received by succession, and not the ministry?

1. For answer unto him, I would know of him whether the Church of England do still, or did at the first, retain the ministry of the Church of Rome, or no? If he say it doth, then I would entreat him and others not to take it ill, if we call and account them priests; for such are the Romish ministers. Secondly. How can the Church of England forsake the Church of Rome, and retain the ministry which is in the church, as in the subject? especially if the ministry make the church, as Mr. B. affirms: for then a true ministry must needs make a true church: and communion with the ministry draws on necessarily communion with the church. But if on the contrary he affirm, that the Church of England doth renounce the ministry or priesthood of the Church of Rome; then I return his demand upon himself, and ask him, why it retains the baptism of Rome? and so leave him to himself for answer.

2. The baptism both in England and Rome is, in the essential causes of it—the matter, water; the form, baptizing into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—Christ's baptism and ordinance, though in the administration it be Antichrist's device: but for the ministry either in Rome or England it is otherwise. The ministry of Christ doth summarily, and in the substance of it, consist in the feeding of the flock, that is, in providing food for the flock, and in guiding and ordering the same accordingly, Acts xx. 28; 1 Pet. v. 1, 2; in a word, in preaching and government. 1 Tim. v. 17. But what is this to the priesthood of England, to let pass that of Rome, unto which preaching is not

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necessarily annexed, nor government so much as permitted? To swear canonical obedience, subscribe, conform, read the service-book, celebrate marriage, church women, and bury the dead, in form and order, are essential and substantial parts or properties of the ministry there, in the present both practice and constitution.

The vessels of gold and silver which were taken out of the temple in the captivity, and carried to Babylon, and there profaned, might notwithstanding, being sanctified from their profanation there, be lawfully carried back to Jerusalem and set up in the temple newly built, and employed, as in former times, to God's service: but had these vessels been broken in pieces in Babylon, and there (being mingled with brass, and iron, and such base metals,) been cast in another mould, they could not then have obtained their former place in the temple, nor there have been used for the holy ministration. Now such is the difference between the baptism and ministry, both in the Romish and English Church. The former, as a vessel of the Lord's house, may with the Lord's people be brought back from Babylon spiritual to the new Jerusalem, and there may, being sanctified by repentance, serve, and be of use to all the ends and purposes for which God hath appointed it. But for the ministry or priesthood, either in the one or other, it is in itself no vessel of the Lord's house; it is neither made of the metal, which the Lord hath appointed, nor cast in his mould. It is essentially degenerated from that office of pastorship, which Christ the Lord hath set in his house for the feeding of the flock by teaching and government, as hath been formerly shown: and is in the true, natural, and canonical institution of it a very devised patchery and compound, like the image which the king of Babylon saw in his dream; save that little or nothing of it is gold or silver, but all brass, iron, and clay, and the like base metal and stuff, Dan. ii. 30, 32, 33: fitting right well, both in the administration of it unto the people, and in the subordination unto the prelacy, for the exaltation of the man of sin, which hath for that very purpose devised it, and placed it in the church for his service: that by it, as by an understep, he might climb up, and advance himself

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into the throne of iniquity, where he sits exalted above all, that is, called God.

3. The ministers of the church now do succeed the priests, and Levites under the law, as baptism also comes in the place of circumcision. Isa. lxvi. 21; Jer. xxxiii. 18, 21; Col. ii. 11, 12. Now we read in the Scriptures, that such of the ten tribes as were in Jeroboam's idolatrous schism and apostacy, thereby, as a branch from the root, cutting off themselves actually from the only true church of God, which was radically at Jerusalem, where the Lord had founded his temple, appointed his sacrifices, and promised his presence; that such of them, I say, as returned to the Lord by repentance, and joined themselves unto the true church, were, by virtue of the circumcision received in that their apostacy, 2 Chron. xxx. 11, 18, 25, wherein they had no title to the seal of the forgiveness of sins, which circumcision was, Rom. iv. 11, admitted into the temple, into which no man uncircumcised might enter, Ezek. xliv. 7; Acts. xxi. 18; and to the participation of the passover, whereof none uncircumcised person might eat, Exod. xii. 48. But that any person should by virtue of his office of priesthood received in that, or the like apostacy, have entered into the Lord's sanctuary, there to have done the priest's office, upon any repentance whatsoever, had been an intolerable usurpation, and sacrilegious invasion of the holy things of God: yea, the sons of Aaron themselves, unto whom the priesthood did of right appertain, if they thus went astray from the Lord after idols, were for ever debarred from doing the priest's office, notwithstanding any repentance they could make; and were to bear, all their lives long, their iniquity and shame. 2 Kings xxiii. 9; Ezek. xliv. 10—13. Now by that which hath been spoken of circumcision, and the priesthood under the law, the reader may easily observe the difference betwixt baptism and the ministry now. The particular application for brevity's sake I forbear.

Fourthly and lastly, The difference betwixt baptism and the ministry is exceeding great, in respect of that special and most necessary relation, which the ministry above baptism hath unto the church: whether we respect the

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entrance into it, or continuance in it. We do read in the Scriptures, that holy men, called thereunto of God, might lawfully administer baptism unto fit persons without the consent or cognition of the church; as Philip did the Samaritans, and the eunuch; Ananias, Saul;—Peter, Cornelius; Paul, Lydia and the jailor, Acts viii. 12, 38; ix. 18; x. 47, 48; xvi. 15, 33: but now for the appointing of ministers without the church's consent and choice, that did they not, as the Scriptures testify, and Mr. B. himself confesseth. And as the entrance of ordinary officers, of which we speak, doth necessarily presuppose a church, by whose election they are to enter, so doth their continuance require a church, in which, as in a subject, they must subsist, and to which they must minister. For since the office of a bishop is a work, a man is no longer a bishop than he worketh. 1 Tim. iii. 1. It is not with the office of ministry, as it is with the order of knighthood, that once a minister, ever a minister. The popish character is a mere fiction, brought in for the confirmation of the sacrament of orders as they call it.

Whensoever the Scriptures do mention elders, or bishops, either in respect of their calling or ministration, they still speak of them, as in or of such and such particular churches, and none otherwise. Acts xiv. 23; xv. 2, 4, 22; xx. 17, 28; 1 Cor. xii. 28; Phil. i. 1; Tit. i. 5; 1 Pet. v. 1, 2. And to imagine an elder or bishop without a church, is to imagine a constable without a parish or hundred; a mayor or alderman without a corporation, or a public officer without some public person, or society, whose officer he is. Hereupon also it followeth, that if the church be dissolved by death, apostasy, or otherwise, the minister ceaseth to be a minister, because the church ceaseth; in relation unto which, under Christ, his ministry consisteth: but on the contrary, a baptized person remains still baptized, though the whole church, yea all the churches of the world be dissolved, so long as God and his Christ remain the same, into whose name he hath been baptized.

And of the same consideration is it, that a minister may, for some scandalous sin, be degraded, and deposed from his ministry, as I have formerly shown, and as all

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churches practise: and so that, which was formerly given him, is taken from him, and he no more a minister, than he was before his calling: yea, if he remain obstinate in his sin, he is to be excommunicated, and so ceasing to be a member, he must needs cease to be a minister of the church. But neither do the Scriptures mention, neither did any church ever attempt the unbaptizing of a baptized person. And, as a man may justly be deposed from his ministry, so may he in cases lawfully depose himself, and lay it down: as if by the hand of God, he be utterly disabled from ministering, as it may come to pass, and oft-times doth: but for a man to lay down his baptism for any such infirmity, were impious, as it were sacrilegious for the church to deprive him thereof. To these considerations I might also add, that if a man forfeit his ministry, and so be deprived of it, either by deposition, or excommunication, and be afterwards upon his repentance judged capable of it, he must have a new calling, or a confirmation at the least, answerable unto a calling: so must it also be with him, that is translated from an inferior office to a superior; but in baptism there may be no such changing, or repetition. The practice were heretical.

Add unto these things, that as a man once baptized is always baptized, so is he in all places, and churches where he comes, as a baptized person, to enjoy the common benefits of his baptism, and to discharge the common duties, which depend upon it. But a pastor is not a pastor in every church, where he comes upon occasion, neither can he require in any other church, saving that one, over which the Holy Ghost hath set him, that obedience, maintenance, and other respect, which is due to the officers from the people; neither stands he charged with that ministry, and service, which is due to the people from the officers: and if you, Mr. B. say otherwise, you make every pastor, a pope, or universal bishop. Epaphras, though he were at Rome, was one of them, that is a minister, of Colosse, Col. iv. 12; so were the elders of Ephesus, though they were at Miletus, the elders of Ephesus only, but of none other church; and charged to feed the flock over which the Holy Ghost had set them, but none other, Acts xx. 17, 28: for over none other had the Holy

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Ghost set them. And as a mayor out of his corporation, a sheriff out of his county, a constable out of his parish or hundred, is no mayor, sheriff, or constable, but in relation to that particular body of which he is, neither can he perform any proper act of his office without usurpation: so neither is a bishop, or elder, a church officer, save in his own particular church, and charge, and in relation unto it, neither can he without ambitious usurpation perform any proper work of his office or ministry, save in that church by, and to which, in his ministration, he is designed.

And thus much, to show the difference betwixt that relative ordinance of the ministry, and that personal ordinance of baptism in the church; as also to prove, that we do lawfully, and with good warrant disclaim, and renounce the ministry received in Rome, and England, notwithstanding we retain the baptism received both in the one, and the other. To which also, I could add, if there were need, or use, both the judgment of the learned at home, and abroad, and the practice of the reformed churches, where we live, for the continuing of the baptism in Rome received, but no more of the mass-priests for ministers, than of the mass itself, for which they were ordained. But it is more than time I come to the main controversy about succession; which might be laid down summarily in these words: Whether the reformed churches were bound to submit, notwithstanding their separation from Rome, unto such ministers only, as were ordained by the Pope and his bishops: but for the better clearing of things I will enlarge my speech to these three distinct considerations:—

Does the Ministry precede the Church or the Church the Ministry?

1. Whether the ministry be before the church, or no.

2. Whether the delegated power of Christ for the use of the holy things of God be given primarily, and immediately to the church, or to the ministers.

3. Whether the Lord have so linked the ministry in the chain of succession, that no minister can be truly called, and ordained, or appointed without a precedent minister.

Touching the first of these Mr. B. affirmeth as in his former book, page 99: that the officers make the church,

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and give denomination unto it; so expressly in his second book, page 187, that the ministry is before the church. And noting in the same place a twofold raising up of the ministry: the first to beget a church: the second, when the church is gathered; he puts the ministers in both before the church: in the former, absolutely, in the latter, in respect of their office, and ordination by succession from the first: in which discourse he intermingleth sundry things, frivolous, unsound, and contradictory.

Now for the first entry, I desire the reader to observe with me, that the question betwixt Mr. Bernard and me is about ordinary ministers, or officers of the church, such as were the first ministers of the reformed churches, and as Mr. B. and I pretend ourselves to be: and not about extraordinary ministers, extraordinarily, miraculously, or immediately, raised up as were Adam, and the apostles by God, and Christ: whom he produceth for examples. Admit the one sort, being called immediately, and miraculously, may be before the church: yet cannot the other, which must be called by men, and those either the church, or members of the church at the least.

Besides, the word minister extends itself not only unto officers ordinary, and extraordinary, but even to any outward means, whether person or thing, by which the revealed will of God is manifested, and made known unto men for their instruction, and conversion. Yea, it reacheth even to God himself: and so far Mr. B. stretcheth it, first book, page 144, where he makes God the first preacher, Gen. ii. 3. As though there were a controversy between him, and me, whether God, or the church were first. I see not but by the same reason he might avouch, that the ministers of the church could not all die, or be deceived, because God is free from these infirmities. It is true which Mr. B. saith, that the Word is before the church, as the seed which begetteth it, and so is that which brings it, yea, whether it be person, or thing, which may also be called a minister, and be said to be sent of God, as it is an instrument to convey, and means to minister the knowledge of the same Word, and will of God unto any. So if any private man, or woman should be a means to publish, or make known the Word of God to a company of Turks, Jews, or other idola-

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ters, he or she might truly be said to be their minister, and the Lord's ambassador unto them, as you speak. Yea, if they came to this knowledge by reading the Bible, or other godly book, that book or Bible, as it served to minister the knowledge of God's will in his Word might truly, in a general sense, be accounted as a minister unto them. But what were all this to a church officer, about whom our question is? These things Mr. B. shuffles together, but the wise reader must distinguish them, and so doing, he shall easily discover his trifling.

The particulars follow. And first, he affirmeth, that God made Adam a minister, to whom he gave a wife to begin the church, and as Adam was before his wife, so is the ministry, at the first before the church.

If Adam's wife began the church, then is your main foundation overthrown; namely that the ministers make, and denominate the church, except you will say, that Eve was a minister. Secondly, it is not true you say, that God made Adam a minister, before Eve was created. In the same place you make, and truly, a minister, and ambassador which brings the word all one; and unto whom could Adam either minister the Word, or be an ambassador to bring it before Eve was formed? There was nothing but brute beasts, and senseless trees, and to them I suppose he brought it not. The truth is, Adam and Eve were the church, not by his, but by her creation, which made a company, or society: and thus we are in the first place to consider of them, and of Adam as a teacher in the second place; the special calling, here and ever, following after and upon the general.

Of the same force with your first proof is your second, which you take from Eph. iv. 11, 12, where it is said, God gave some, not only to confirm the church, but to gather the saints to make a church.

To let pass your boldness with the words, I except against your exposition, and application of them. The word "gathering" * upon which you insist, is in some books termed repairing, and is the same in the Greek with that which is restoring, Gal. vi. 1, of which I have spoken formerly.

* So rendered generally in the earlier versions.

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Again, Paul in that place speaks not only of apostles, and other ministers of the first raising up, for the begetting of churches: but of pastors, and teachers which were taken out of the church, and of the second raising, for the feeding of the flock. You will not deny but the apostles and brethren at Jerusalem were a church of God, Acts i. 15, 16, when as yet no pastors or teachers were appointed in it: and how then can your doctrine stand, that the ministers spoken of, Eph. iv. 11, 12, amongst which were pastors and teachers, were before the church, out of which they were taken, and raised up of God to beget a church? Yea, it is evident that the very office of pastor was not then heard of in the church; whereby the falsity of your other affirmation is discovered, to wit, that the office of such ministers as are of the second raising, and which are taken out of the church, is before the church.

Thirdly, The apostles themselves, howsoever extraordinary officers immediately called, and sent forth to beget other churches both of Jews and Gentiles, were Christians before they were apostles, and members of the church before they were officers. And the Scriptures do expressly testify, that God ordained, or set in the church apostles, amongst other officers, 1 Cor. xii. 28: and this their setting in the church doth, necessarily, presuppose a church, wherein they were set, as the setting of a candle in a candlestick, presupposeth a candlestick: as indeed the church is the candlestick, and the officers the candles, lights, and stars, which are set in it. Rev. i. 2; Matt. v. 14, 15.

Lastly, It is a senseless affirmation you make, that a man sent to win people is a minister to the hidden number, not yet called out, which are also his flock potentially though not actually.

The Scriptures, John x. 3, and you, accordingly in another place, page 302, make it a property of a good minister to call his own sheep by name, that is, as you expound it, to take notice of his people and of their growth in religion, &c., and now here, you will have a minister of the hidden number whereof he can take no notice at all; nor can tell whether or no, he shall find one sheep amongst them. Besides, you commit a logical error in raising an

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actual minister from the relation he hath unto a flock potentially; you may as truly affirm, that a single man towards marriage is a husband, and a father, because he may have wife and children. Any man, that upon a just calling, or occasion, opens and makes known the gospel of salvation unto a company of Turks, or Pagans, may in that general sense be called the Lord's minister sent unto them: but a church officer, of whom our question is, till he have by his ministry called, and separated them unto the Lord, and be by their election, called, and separated to his office, can he neither be, nor be called.

One thing more you add, which is, that ministers may be the church, as they are Christians, and that they are ministers in respect of an office bestowed upon them in their state of Christianity; wherein you speak, and that truly, sufficient to overthrow not only your particular error in this place, but well nigh your whole writing. For thereupon it followeth, First, That the church is before the ministry, because men are a church as they are Christians, and Christians, before they be ministers. Second, That ministers make not the church, but become such by an office bestowed upon them in their state of Christianity, that is, in their church state. Thirdly, That the Christian brethren though not in office are part of the church, Matt. xviii., since even the officers themselves are acknowledged the church, or of the church, as they are Christians.

I come now unto the second consideration, and do affirm against Mr. B. that the delegated, and communicated power of Christ is given primarily, and immediately to the church, and not to the officers.

This point I have formerly handled at large, under two general heads, opened in the former part of my book,* unto which I do intreat the reader to look back, yet will I for further satisfaction briefly annex a few things.

First, Because unto the Jews were of credit committed the oracles of God, unto whom also did the covenants appertain, and all the privileges of them, as to the commonwealth of Israel. Rom. iii. 2; ix. 4; Eph. ii. 12.

2. Because the ministers themselves are given to the church; and the church's immediately, as the church is

* Vide vol. ii. pp. 131, 132.

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Christ's, and Christ, God's. 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. And if this holy thing, the ministry, be the church's immediately, then other things also as well as it, in respect of right, and possession, though she use the service of the ministers ordinarily for the dispensation, and execution of them. It is not denied, but that the officers in such works, as they perform unto the church in the name of the Lord, as of doctrine, exhortation, admonition, and the like, stand in a more immediate relation unto the Lord, than the church doth; but it must also be remembered, that this no more advanceth the order of their office above the order of the body, than it doth one private brother, performing the same work orderly in the exercise of prophesying or otherwise.

3. The officers are to dispense, and execute the holy things of God, as the servants and ministers of Christ and his church; and whatsoever they do in their office, they do it, as the servants, and ministers both of Christ and of the church, Rom. xv. 31; 1 Cor. iv. 1; 2 Cor. iv. 5; Col. i. 24, 25. Now common sense teacheth men, that, what power, or authority soever the servants, or ministers of others have, or use in their places, that authority and power, they have first, whose servants and ministers they are; and that therefore the holy things of God are primarily, and immediately the church's under Christ, and in the last place the officers', as the servants of Christ, and his church, for execution, in the order, which Christ hath left.

Can a Church alone make a Minister?

The last, and greatest question now comes into handling, namely, whether ministers may be made by such as are no ministers. For this phrase of making ministers Mr. B. affects much, belike with reference special to the ministers of England, and Rome, who are fitly said to be made by the bishops, and to be the workmanship of their hands.

Mr. Bernard vehemently urgeth the negative part, namely, that no minister may be made but by a minister: and tying, as he doth the church to the ministry, and the ministry to succession, there is cause he should. For if

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the chair of succession should break, both the church and ministry of England must fall to the ground.

The only argument he brings for his purpose, is an historical narration, as he speaks, from time to time, without any one instance to the contrary; and the constant practice of the church of God from the days of Adam hitherto. 2nd book, 186; 1st book, 144.

I desire the reader in the first place to take knowledge from me, that I deny not, but confess, that the churches of God, more particularly, and the churches of the New Testament continuing and abiding in that state, faith and order wherein they were set, Col. ii. 5, and established by the Lord in the hands of his servants, the apostles and evangelists, were to receive their ministers constantly by succession, after a sort, namely so far, as that all succeeding ministers were to be ordained by ministers, and no otherwise. But would any man, save either a marked servant of the Pope, or one that cared not what he wrote for some present seeming advantage, argue as this man doth, from the estate of the churches of Christ, and in particular of the church at Rome, in Peter and Paul's time, to the estate, wherein now it is, or was an hundred years since, in which estate we are to consider of it? But of this more hereafter.

The historical narration before spoken of, Mr. B. divides into four times or ages: the first whereof is from the beginning of the world, till the giving of the law: the second from the law, till Christ's coming: the third from Christ, till the end of the history of the New Testament: the fourth, and last from that time, hitherto; pages 184, 185.

Let us consider of his instances. And first, saith he, God at the world's beginning, ordained Adam in his place; and till the law, did raise up extraordinary teachers, whom he also nameth in his second book, as Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Levi, and the rest.

As it is true that all ministers are both to be called and ordained of God, and ordinary ministers to be called by the church, and ordained by the church officers, if there be any in that church: by and to which the latter are called, so neither doth the age wherein you first instance,

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draw any such straight line of succession, or conclude any such necessity of ordination by precedent officers, as you pretend. And that you may more clearly see this, you must take notice of your error, in affirming that God raised up extraordinary teachers till the law.

The first-born in the families were the ordinary teachers, ordinarily succeeding, till the Levites were appointed, the office of priesthood being annexed to their birthright.

In which respect it was that God told Cain, his brother's desire should be unto him, and that he should rule over him. Gen. iv. 7. For which purpose see also Gen. xxi. 19; xxv. 31—34. Add unto this also, that the Lord would have every first-born amongst the children of Israel consecrated unto him, Exod. xii. 2; that the priests, or (as it is better turned) the administrators of the holy things which come near to the Lord, should sanctify themselves, ch. xix. 22: and that Moses sent the young men of the children of Israel to offer burnt offerings and sacrifices unto the Lord, ch. xxiv. 5. But most evidently doth this appear in that the Levites were appointed to teach the people and to offer sacrifices, and to do the service of the children of Israel in the tabernacle of the congregation, for the first-born, that openeth the matrix among the children of Israel. Numb. iii. 12, 13; viii. 15, 16, with Deut. xxxiii. 10.

And as the first-born were the ordinary teachers successively before the law, in whose stead the Levites afterwards were appointed; so was this order in sundry persons, and upon sundry occasions, broken and interrupted. As in Cain for his murder: in Terah for his idolatry: in Ishmael for his mocking: and in Esau for his profaneness. Gen. iv. 8, 12, 14, 16; xi. 31, with Josh. xxiv. 2, 15; Gen. xxi. 9, 14; xxv. 31—34; Heb. xii. 16; Gen. xxvii. 27. To descend lower. When the order of succession in the priesthood was so far established, as that it did devolve, by the Word of God, from the parents upon the children, as by an hereditary right, yet then we see it was sometimes for the sins of men, broken off and interrupted. Take, for instance, Eli and his house. The Lord God of Israel had said that his house, and the house of his father, should walk before him for ever; but now the Lord saith,

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"It shall not be; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be despised. Behold the days shall come that I will cut off the arm of thy father's house," &c.: then he adds, "And I will stir me up a faithful priest that shall do according to mine heart, and according to my mind," 1 Sam. ii. 30, 31, 35, &c., which was also especially accomplished in Solomon's days, when the priesthood was translated from Abiathar to Zadok. 1 Kings ii. 35. To the same purpose tends that which the prophets Ezekiel and Hosea threaten and denounce against other priests of Israel, for their idolatry and other iniquities. The Levites, saith the Lord, which went back from me, when Israel went astray, shall bear their iniquity: and they shall not come near unto me to do the office of the priest unto me, Ezek. xliv. 10, 13, &c. And again by Hosea, iv. 6, 7, "Because thou hast refused knowledge I will also refuse thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: and seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children, I will change their glory into shame."

For the shutting up of this point; the Lord Jesus himself coming to repair the decayed places of Sion, and to enlarge the walls of Jerusalem, did not choose his apostles out of the number of priests, and other ordinary teachers, but elsewhere. They indeed supposed, as the prelates and priests now do, that the Lord could neither propagate nor maintain his church but by them, because they were the children of Abraham: but John Baptist tells them, and all others with them, that hang upon the same, or like line of personal succession, which they did, that except they prevent the Lord's wrath, and bring forth fruits worthy amendment of life, he will with the axe of his wrath hew them down, and cast them as unfruitful trees into the fire: raising up unto Abraham seed, and children of the very stones. Matt. iii. 9.

If now the Lord have thus ever and anon, from the beginning of the world, changed the course, and current of succession for these sins, namely murder, idolatry, persecution, profaneness, and the like, is it possible that the stream should still run, by the Lord's appointment, without stop or change, for so many hundred years in the Romish Church, where these, and all other sins and ini-

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quities have abounded? and where they all, as so many members compacted together, make the man of sin complete? Is the Lord less zealous now-a-days, than in times past of the honour of his name, and ordinances? Or hath St. Peter procured some charter of impunity for his successors, the Popes of Rome, what impieties soever they have fallen, or can fall into? Or doth this man think, by any plea he can make for them, to hold them in possession of that right which they have so notoriously forfeited so many ways, and for so many years, and whereof the Word of God hath so evidently disseized them? For conclusion of this particular, the apostle Paul foretelling the general apostacy of that man of sin, the child of perdition, advancing himself above all that is called God, or is worshipped, addeth that the Lord will destroy him with the spirit of his mouth. 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4. In which words we are to observe, first, the universality of the apostacy, advancing itself above all that is called God, ver. 8; and secondly, the manner of restoration of the church, which is to be by the Lord, and the spirit of his mouth, where if it were to be by the ministers of Antichrist's making, or the Pope's calling, then should the man of sin consume himself. Join with this scripture another of the same nature, wherein the Holy Ghost, speaking by the mouth of John, of the same general apostacy, foretells how God would raise up his two witnesses, which should prophesy against the beast which came out of the bottomless pit, Rev. xi. 3, 7, and against all the abominations of Antichrist; whereas, by the doctrine of succession, no witnesses should be raised up against Antichrist but by himself.

Now, by these scriptures and instances it appears, that the stream of succession hath not run so currently from the days of Adam hitherto, as Mr. B. pretendeth, but that it hath sundry times been stopped, and turned by, and that most specially in the Romish apostacy.

The thing I purpose in the next place is, to prosecute certain arguments of Mr. Smyth's, and the rather because himself hath in a measure forsaken this truth with others, adding also some others unto them, to prove that the ministry, and so other the holy things of God, is not tied by Christ to the succession of office or order, but of faith.

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The arguments I will take up as Mr. Bernard, together with their answers, lays them down in his second book, pages 186—188.

Of the first argument I have spoken in another place. The second is, that if Christ's ministerial power be by succession to the Pope, bishops, or presbytery, then the ministry of Rome is a true ministry. Mr. B.'s answer is, that he means true succession, which is both personal and hath with it a true office, true doctrine, true sacraments, and prayer, about which Christ's true ministers are exercised: but for the Romish ministry it is idolatry and superstition, and the men appointed thereto ordained sacrificing priests.

This answer of yours, Mr. B., puts me in mind of a practice of children, who when they have a long while busied themselves in drawing the best forms and figures they can in dust and ashes, do at the last, with one dash of their hand, deface all, and undo what they have formerly done. And that this childish dealing you use, no reader that considers the question in hand, can be ignorant of.

The question then between him and me, is not of such a succession personal as hath joined with it succession in a true office, true doctrine, true sacraments and prayer, wherein the minister is in any measure faithfully exercised: but generally, whether succession of persons be of such absolute necessity, as that no minister can in any case be made but by a minister, and more specially, whether the first ministers of the reformed church, or of such as come out of the confusion of Antichrist, must of necessity be ordained by the Pope, and his bishops, or minister by virtue of their ordination so received. And that this succession by and from the Romish ministry, is that Mr. B. pleads for, his writings manifest: as first, that, as in all the apostles' time the ministry was by succession; ministers, as it were, begetting ministers by ordination, so after their time the like succession hath been kept from time to time, bishop after bishop, and ministers ordained by them: which the catalogue of them, and stories of times, on which we must rely, where the Scriptures cease to make further relation, do witness, Book 2, 185, 186: for the continuation of which succession to the world's end, he allegeth

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Matt. xxviii. 20, odiously perverting to the Pope, and his shavelings, the promise which Christ there made, to be with his apostles, and other faithful ministers, teaching the things which he had commanded, and dispensing his other ordinances accordingly. Answerable unto which is his other saying, in which his terms and meaning do well suit, that churchmen ever ordained ministers, and not the lay people. To this also let his inference be added in another place, page 311, that, if we receive and hold our baptism from Rome, why not our ordination also? And in his former book, page 144, most clearly condemning our ministers for being made by such as are no ministers; contrary to the constant practice of the church of God from the days of Adam hitherto. And again, that this custom of ordaining ministers did continue, in the times following the apostles' times, (as before it had done,) in all the churches of Christendom, as ecclesiastical writers do make mention, and so through pure and impure churches: and that, God in the last reformation of his church, would not break this order; but choose men who were bishops ordained even in the Popish church, so that they might ordain fit persons afterwards. And this he tells the reader he speaks of the Church of England, as indeed he may well; for other churches departed from Rome, would be loth to join in his plea. And, lastly, he chargeth us with great presumption for daring to break this order of God, continued five thousand and six hundred years.

Now what can be more vain? The very point which Mr. Bernard is to prove, and from which he brings his historical narration from Adam to this day, is, that God hath continued the course of succession in the Romish ministry, and that from, and by it successively, the ministry in England hath been, and is at this day, continued. And yet in his answer to Mr. Smyth, he is driven to affirm that he hath no reference at all to the Romish ministry, which he accounts idolatry and superstition: but means such a personal succession as hath joined with it a true office, true doctrine, and the like. He will have succession continued from the days of Adam hitherto; and this to have been the order of God for five thousand and six hundred years: and that he chose bishops ordained in the Popish

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church to ordain fit persons in the Church of England: and yet Mr. Smyth is to know he speaks not at all of the succession in the Romish ministry, which is idolatry and superstition.

On the Ordination of Ministers.

Now that the more simple reader may not lose himself in this man's maze, and that he may the better know the state of the question, and judge of it, I will here interpose some few things touching succession and ordination accordingly.

First, then, we acknowledge, that in the right and orderly state of things, no ministers are to be ordained but by ministers; the latter by the former in the churches, where they are, and over which the Holy Ghost hath set them. And so the apostles being general and extraordinary men, unto whom the evangelists also were joined for assistance to water where they planted, and to finish the works by them begun, as they had the care of all the churches committed unto them, and were charged with them, so were they also to ordain the elders and bishops in them, and the people bound to wait their coming for that purpose, as Mr. B. truly affirmeth: as were also these bishops, or elders, to ordain others in the churches over which they were set, and so others after them in the order appointed by Christ in his apostles; with whom also he promised to be always till the world's end, and in this and the like their holy ministrations. 1 Cor. iii. 6; Tit. i. 5; 2 Cor. ix. 28; Acts xv. 36; 1 Cor. iv. 17; Acts. xiv. 23; Tit. i. 5; Matt. xxviii. 20. But is the consequence good, that, because the apostles and evangelists were to ordain elders in the churches by commission from Christ, and that the people converted from Judaism, or Paganism, were to wait till they came to ordain them their ministers; therefore the Pope, and prelates under him, have commission from Christ to ordain his priests, and that the people converted from Antichristianism are to wait till they come to ordain them their ministers, or till they send them such as they have always in store ordained to their hands? or that because the apostles and evangelists had Christ's promise to be with them always; that, therefore, the Pope, cardinals, lord

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bishops, and lord suffragans have interest in the same promise? It might as well be concluded, that as the Lord's people were bound to obey and submit unto the former in their times, so are they now to submit unto, and obey the Pope and his underlings. And yet is this the very mark Mr. Bernard aims at in his long-drawn historical narration: this is the force of his argument, and his manner of arguing. If this line hold from Peter to the Pope, and from the Pope to his clergy, and so successively to the ministry of England, then it stands upright; if it break, then doth the ministry of England, which as Mr. Bernard truly and honestly confesseth is thus raised, fall flat to the ground: as indeed it doth according to the foretelling of the angel, "It is fallen, it is fallen, Babylon the great city." Rev. xiv. 8.

But here it will be demanded of me, how the Lord's people coming out of Babylon, separating from Rome, are to obtain, and enjoy ministers. Surely one of these three ways. Either by the extraordinary, immediate, or miraculous designation of God; or by succession; or by the same people's choice, or appointment, to which they are to minister. To expect ministers by the first means were fancy, and presumption: so that by one of the two other ways they must come necessarily. The power of the holy things of God, and so especially of erecting the ministry, is either tied to the order of office, and so to the order of the popeship and prelacy under it, or else to the faith of the people of God forsaking Babylon, and joining together in the covenant of Abraham, and fellowship of the gospel. The former of these, though Mr. B. be driven to plead it in the proof of succession, yet in the defence of it, he is forced to disclaim and disavow: yielding the Romish ministry to be idolatry and superstition, and that he speaks of such a succession, as requires with it a true office, true doctrine, true sacraments, and prayer, page 188, and again that he means by succession a continuance of God's ordinance by persons elected thereto from time to time, being of spiritual kindred by the faith of doctrine, by which the ordinance is upheld, and true succession maintained, page 190. With which grant of his I might rest, as indeed, wherein he yieldeth the whole cause, and cuts off, as it

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were with his own hands, the cord of true succession in the Church of Rome; making it to fail, when the truth of doctrine, and of election failed in the same church. But because it is so common a thing with him, to say, and unsay, and to say again the same things, either forgetting himself, or thinking others forget, or because he would say something to everything, though never so contrary both to the truth and himself in another place, I will press Mr. Smyth's other arguments. The third of which is, that by the doctrine of succession men are bound absolutely to sin, in joining to the sin of the minister. This is, saith Mr. B., to take unproved a principle of Brownism to overthrow a truth, namely, that a man cannot receive the holy things of God, but he must needs sin with others.

And is it so indeed? Do not the Scriptures everywhere teach men to avoid, reject, and hold accursed, false teachers, heretics, and idolaters? and not to partake in the sin of others, either by practising them, or giving consent, or countenance unto them? Rom. xvi. 17; Gal. i. 8; 1 Tim. vi. 3—5; Tit. iii. 10, 11; 1 Tim. v. 22; 2 John 10, 11; Rev. xviii. 4. Whereupon it followeth, that the doctrine, which binds the ministry, and other holy things of God unto succession, and thereby to partake with heretics and false teachers, or at least with such in their ministration, as have received the power, and authority by which they minister from the pope, and his prelacy, binds men to sin in joining with the sins of the ministers.

Of the Jewish church and priesthood, which Mr. B. here objects, I have spoken formerly, and do now add, that, as no man is now so tied to any church, or ministry in the world, as was every faithful person in the world than to that one temple, and priesthood at Jerusalem, so neither could any man then, without sin, communicate with an heretical, or idolatrous priest, especially ministering in a false office, and by the like calling, and commission, which the ministers both in Rome, and England do.

In the fourth argument, Mr. B. deals dishonestly. Mr. Smyth's inference upon the doctrine of succession, is, that then the Lord hath made the ministers lord over the church, so that the church cannot have or enjoy any of the

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Lord's ordinances, or holy things, except they will consent unto them; for the holy things are in their power. Now Mr. B. only trifles about the word lord, and passeth by the substance of the inference which is most found upon the doctrine. For if the Lord's ordinances and holy things be tied to the ministers, then without their consent there can be no use of them. And so where ministers either are not, or not willing to communicate them, there can be no church, no election of ministers, no keys of the kingdom, and so no salvation: as I have formerly manifested upon Matt. xvi. 19.

The sum of Mr. Smyth's fifth argument is, that then the pope may excommunicate the whole church universal; the bishops their whole dioceses, and provinces: and the presbytery the particular church whereof it is. Your answer, Mr. Bernard, is, that this were to do the pope a great favour, to prove him to have an universal power, &c., and, secondly, that by this sequel of Mr. Smyth's, this absurdity would follow, that the bishop might cast out the church out of the church.

It is you that do the pope this great favour, though you would not own it. For if the ministry make the church, and that Rome be a true church, then must the ministry of Rome be true, specially of the pope, from which the other is derived as from the head.

Again, if the ordination by the bishops in the impure church of Rome be the Lord's order, as you expressly affirm, page 145, of your former book, then must the pope's universal power, by which the bishops do universally ordain, be the power of the Lord which from him he hath received for that purpose. They which hold, that the power of the keys was given first and immediately to the apostle Peter, and so to the popes of Rome his successors, they hold that the pope may excommunicate the whole church: so they which hold the bishop, or his substitute to be meant, where Christ saith, "Tell the church," they must necessarily hold, that the bishop or his substitute may excommunicate his whole province, or diocese; and so of them which hold the presbytery to be the church there spoken of, for the particular assembly over which it is. The church there meant may excommunicate any

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brother, or brethren, whom, or how many soever, that refuse to hear her; as the church of Corinth, to whom Paul wrote might judge all them which were within, and not without, and under the Lord's judgment. 1 Cor. i. 2; v. 12, 13.

Who ordains the Pope?

The substance of the seventh and last objection, is, for the sixth hath no weight in it, that the doctrine of succession overthrows itself, and the reason is, because one pope doth not make another by ordination whilst he lives, but the cardinals do by election make the new pope after the death of the former. So that the pope receiving his ministerial power from the cardinals, cannot give it to them, and so to the rest of the clergy in Rome, and England, neither can it descend from Christ through the apostles, and so through him to the other inferior ministers, but as in a chain, if the highest link be broken, the rest which hang upon it must needs fall. So if there be a breach of this chain of succession from the apostles to the ministry of Rome, and of England, which descends of it lineally, in the highest link, the pope, all the rest of the chain that hangs upon it, except it be otherwise upheld, must needs fall flat upon the ground. It is true which Mr. B. answers that election and succession by ordination may stand together in the ministry, but in this case it cannot, except the pope should, by the election of the cardinals or others, ordain his succession whilst himself survived. Now in this last answer Mr. B. challengeth his adversary to be wild in wandering, and to have lost his question, in concluding that the doctrine of succession is a false doctrine, where he should prove that Christ's power is not given to the principal members. But this challenge is both unjust and unadvised. Unjust, because succession from the popish church, and clergy is made by Mr. B. in his former book, page 145, the foundation of the ministry of England, and so of the church: the church by his affirmation being made by the ministers, and the ministers by such bishops as were ordained in the popish church. Unadvised, because these two points, do depend each upon other necessarily. For if Christ's power

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be tied to the officers, whether principal or inferior, then must it come to the ministry, and Church of England by succession: if it come not by succession, from or by the pope and his clergy, then must it come by the same succession of faith, and doctrine unto the children of Abraham, two or three or more faithful persons joined together in the covenant, and fellowship of the gospel. And for the question in Mr. Bernard's own words, remitting the reader to such places as prove, that a company of faithful people in the covenant of the gospel, though without officers are a visible church, that they have immediate right to the holy things of God; and that the keys for binding and loosing were given to Peter's confession, I will add only one argument, and so proceed.

It hath been sundry times observed, and proved by the Scriptures, that the officers of the church, are the servants of the church, and their office a service of the Lord, and of his church. Numb. xvi. 9; xviii. 7; 2 Chron. xxxv. 3; Ezek. xliv. 11; Matt. xx. 25—27; 2 Cor. iv. 5; Rom. xv. 31. Whereupon it followeth necessarily, that what power the officers have, the body of the church hath first, and before them, the very light of nature, and common sense teaching it, that what power or authority soever the servants of any body, or persons have, the body or persons whose servants they are, must have it first, and they by them. And for this purpose let it be further observed, that no power at all came unto the church of the Jews by the Levites: not the use of the sacrament of circumcision; no, nor of the very sacrifices which were offered by the first born in the family, and that even after the people's coming out of Egypt under the hand of Moses, till Levi was called to the priesthood. Exod xiii. 2; xxiv. 5.

I proceed. If the ministry of the reformed churches must be by succession, or ordination by popish bishops, then must the same office of ministry be continued from the one church to the other: as indeed it was with all the ministers of the Church of England at the first; who without any new either calling, or ordination, which depends upon it, continued their office, and place formerly received; there being only a reformation of some of the grossest evils, like the healing of Job's sores, as Mr. B.

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speaketh: as the office of justiceship or the like, in the commonwealth, may be continued the same in the same persons individually, though by edict of parliament, or other superior power, there be a surceasing of some main act of it.

Further, to tie the ministry thus to succession, is to tie the Lord's sheep to submit to no other shepherds but such as the wolves have appointed. And if a company of God's people in Rome, or Spain, should come out of Babylon, and no consecrated priest amongst them, they must, by this doctrine, enjoy no ministers, but such as the Romish wolves will ordain, and do, according to their popish and profane order.

To these things, I might also add, that look what power any of the pope's clergy receive from him, the same he takes from them and deprives them of, when they withdraw their obedience, or separate from that church: as also that the ordinations in Rome, by their own canons, are very nullities, and many the like exceptions pleaded by learned protestants against the Romish priesthood, and this Romish doctrine of succession; but that which hath been spoken is sufficient in the general, and I hasten to the third and last means of the three, by which God's people after Antichrist's defection are to enjoy the ministry, and other of Christ's ordinances.

What is Ordination?

And for our better proceeding herein, I will first consider, what ordination is: and, secondly, how far the brethren may go by the Scriptures, and the necessary consequences drawn from them, in this and the like cases, in the first planting of churches, or in the reducing of them into order, in or after some general confusion. The prelates, and those, which level by their line, do highly advance ordination, and far above the administration of the Word, sacraments, and prayer: making it, and the power of excommunication the two incommunicable prerogatives of a bishop, in their understanding, above an ordinary minister.* But surely herein these chief ministers do not succeed the chief ministers, the apostles, except as dark-

* Vide, Bishop Barlow's Sermon before the King.

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ness succeeds light, and Antichrist's confusion, Christ's order. When the apostles were sent out by Christ, there was no mention of ordination; their charge was to teach all nations, and baptize them: and that the apostles accounted preaching their principal work, and after it baptism, and prayer the Scriptures manifest. Matt. xxviii. 20; Acts vi. 4; 1 Cor. i. 17. And if ordination had been in those days so prime a work, surely Paul would rather have tarried in Crete himself to have ordained elders there, and have sent Titus an inferior officer about that inferior work of preaching, than have gone himself about that, leaving Titus for the other. Tit. i. 5.

But, because Mr. Bernard, with whom I deal, when he writes most advisedly, page 137, first book, prefers preaching to the first place, and the administration of the sacraments, and prayer to the next, passing by ordination as not worthy the naming amongst these principal works, I will therefore leave it to be honoured by them, whom it most honoureth, and for whose ease, and profit it best serveth, and will consider in what place he setteth it.

He then pleading, that as well the ordination, as the baptism received in Rome is to be held, makes ordination and the calling of the ministers all one, second book, page 311. Wherein as he unfitly compares together things not to be compared, to wit, baptism into the name of the true God, and ordination into a false office, except he hold a mass-priesthood, a true office, so doth he unadvisedly confound a part with the whole, yea, the last and least part, as ordination is: and which doth indeed depend upon the people's lawful election, as an effect upon the cause, by virtue of which it is justly administered, and may be thus described or considered of us: as the admission of, or putting into possession, a person lawfully elected, into, or of a true office of ministry. For example, the mayor, bailiff, or other chief officer in a privileged city, or corporation, is chosen by the people to his office, but withal must be entered, and inaugurated with some solemn ceremony, as the giving of the city's keys, or sword, into his hand, or the like, by his predecessor. So is it with the ministers, the officers of this spiritual corporation in the church, the right unto their offices they have by election,

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the possession of them by ordination, with the ceremony of imposition of hands. The apostle Peter, advertising the disciples or brethren that one, so fitted as is there noted, was to be made in the room of Judas, a witness with the eleven apostles of the resurrection of Christ; when two were by them presented, such as were fit and by them so deemed, did, with the rest present them two and none other to the Lord, that he by the immediate direction of the lot might show, whether of them two he had chosen, Acts i. 15, 16, 21, 22, 26. In like manner the twelve being to institute the office of deaconry in the church at Jerusalem, called the multitude of the disciples together, and informed them what manner of persons they were to choose, which choice being made by the brethren accordingly, and they so chosen presented to the apostles, they forthwith ordained them, by virtue of the election so made by the brethren. Acts vi. 2, 3, 5, 6. To these add, that the apostles, Paul and Barnabas, being thereunto called by the Holy Ghost, did pass from church to church, and from place to place, and in every church, where they came, did ordain them elders by the people's election, signified by their lifting up of hands, as the word is, and as the use was in popular elections, throughout those countries. Acts xiii. 2; xiv. 23. Now the apostles were in a manner strangers unto them, coming as it were to one place over night, and ready to depart the next morning, or at least tarrying a very small while in every church, as doth appear, both by the course of the story, and by the many several places they passed to and from, and those of them distant one from another a great space, both by sea and land. So that neither the liberty of the very apostles was so great in ordaining, as was the people's in choosing: neither were they to ordain but such as the other chose, nor but to ordain them, except just exception were against them: neither was their ordination so much as the others' election, no more than possession is so much as right: neither did the apostles in their ordination rely so much upon their own as upon the people's knowledge, and experience of the men, which were to be called into office.

Besides these things, though it appear that Paul and Barnabas were ordained by laying on of hands, to that

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special work appointed them by the Holy Ghost, and that the evangelists were so ordained, and so the bishops or elders in the churches by the apostles and evangelists, Acts xiii. 1—3; 1 Tim. iv. 14; ii. 1, 6; Acts xiv. 23; yet read we of no such solemnity performed by Christ upon his apostles, when he called them; nor by Peter, or the apostles at the choice of Matthias, Acts i. 26, but being by the people presented with Joseph, and by the Lord singled out by lot, he was by a common consent counted with the eleven apostles. Whereupon also some reformed churches, the churches in Scotland, have thought that this solemn ordination by imposition of hands is of no such necessity, but that it might be used, or not used indifferently, and so have practised.

But the judgment and plea, when they deal with us, of the most forward men in the land, in this case, I may not omit; which is, that they renounce, and disclaim their ordination by the prelates, and hold their ministry by the people's acceptation. Now if the acceptation of a mixed company under the prelate's government, as is the best parish assembly in the kingdom, whereof the greatest part have by the revealed will of God, no right to the covenant, ministry, or other holy things, be sufficient to make a minister, then much more the acceptation of the people with us, being all of them jointly, and every one of them severally, by the mercy of God, capable of the Lord's ordinances.

These things, thus opened, I come in the next, and last place to manifest, what liberty the Scriptures, just consequence, and good reason do allow the people for the reducing themselves into the order, and under the ministry of Christ, after some general confusion, such as the papacy was and is.

And for this purpose, I intreat the reader to recognize with me the points lately mentioned, and proved, namely that a company of faithful people in the covenant of the gospel are a church, though without officers: that this church hath interest in all the holy things of God within itself, and immediately under Christ the head, without any foreign assistance: that in cases, a private person, or brother, in such a church, may do a necessary work of an

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officer, that the keys of the kingdom were given to, and the church to be built upon the rock of Peter's confession. Matt. xvi. 18. And so I come to the point itself.*

Scriptural Ordination.

I do then acknowledge, that, where there are already lawful officers in a church, by and to which, others are called, there the former, upon that election, are to ordain, and appoint the latter. The officers, being the ministers of the church, are to execute the determinations, and judgments of the church under the Lord: the censures of deposition, and excommunication by pronouncing the sentence of judgment, and by it, as by the sword of the Spirit drawn out, cutting off the officer from his office, and the member from the body, and all communion with it: so are they to execute the people's election, by pronouncing the person elect to his office, charging him with the faithful execution of it, with imposition of hands and prayer. And indeed ordination, in the calling of the ministers is properly the execution of election.

But as in a civil corporation, or city, though the mayor, bailiff, or other chief officer, elect, be at his entrance and inauguration, to receive at the hands of his predecessor, the sword, or keys of the city, or to have some other solemn ceremony by him performed unto him: yet if either there be no former, as at the first; or that the former be dead, or upon necessity absent, when his successor entereth, then is this ceremony and work performed by some other the fittest instrument: neither need that city borrow an officer of another city: neither could he intermeddle there, without usurpation, though both the corporations have the same charter, under the same king: so is it in this spiritual corporation, and city of God, the church: the former officers, if there be any in that particular congregation, are to ordain such as succeed: but if none be to be found, this corporation is not to go to the next to borrow an officer, or two, but may use such fit persons, as she hath, for that service so absolutely necessary: neither may the officers of another corporation do the acts of their office in that,

* Vide vol. ii. pp. 131, 132, 138, 150, 151, 157, 158, *supra*.

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except they be either apostles, or evangelists, and have general charges: or rather except they will make themselves popes: as indeed this exorbitant, and roving course makes as many universal bishops, in respect of power, and so likewise of execution, if there be occasion, as there are officers in all the churches.

But to come unto the Scriptures, it hath been formerly noted that the first-born in the family, before the law, did perform the priest's office: in whose place the Levites were afterwards substituted. Now as the priests of the Levites did not enter upon their office without solemn consecration, Exod. xxix. 1—3, nor the ministers of the New Testament upon theirs, without solemn ordination or appointment, Acts vi. 6, and xiv. 23, so neither can it be conceived, that the first-born did take unto themselves the honour to administer, without some solemnity performed to or upon them, by their predecessors, Heb. v. 4: and so we read, that when Isaac conveyed the blessing, and birthright to Jacob, he kissed him, Gen. xxvii. 27, as did Jacob also lay his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, when with the blessing, he did transfer the birthright to him from Manasseh. Gen. xlviii. 17—20. But, if the father of the family were suddenly taken away, or died before his first-born were capable of this ministration, then could he not thus solemnly resign, or transmit to him the office or work, but there must needs have been some interposition of another, if any solemn admission at all were required. To come lower. When the Levites were given, at the first, to the Lord, as a redemption of the first-born, for the service of the tabernacle, we do find that the people did, by putting their hands upon them, offer, and ordain them, as their shake-offering, and gift unto the Lord, Numb. viii. 6, 9, 10, 20, 21. But this liberty, which the people here used, by the Lord's appointment, at the first, and when the first officers were consecrated in the church, we do not read to have continued, or so to have been used in the consecration of the succeeding Levites ordinarily.

And, as the Lord would have the people to use this special liberty, in the first institution and consecration of the Levites in that church, which notwithstanding they used not in the ordinary consecration of such Levites, as

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followed, when the church was once furnished with officers, so doth the Holy Ghost give testimony of the same, or the like liberty used by them afterwards upon a special occasion, and in that general confusion, which fell upon the whole church, when the priests were slain, and the ark of God was taken by the Philistines.

It is then noted, I Sam. vii. 1, that, upon the message from the men of Bethshemesh, 1 Sam. vi. 20, 21, "the men of Kirjath-jearim came, and took up the ark of the Lord, and brought it into the house of Abinadab in the hill; and that they sanctified Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the Lord." And the very same word which is used, Exod. xxix. 1, where the Lord bids Moses consecrate the sons of Aaron to be priests, is used in this place where the men of Kirjath-jearim sanctified Eleazar to keep the ark: sanctification and consecration being all one in substance, and the word the same in the original.

Lastly, The apostle Paul writes to the churches of Galatia to reject as accursed, such ministers whomsoever, as should preach otherwise, than they had already received, Gal. i. 1, 2, 8, 9; and the same apostle writes to the church at Colosse, to admonish Archippus to take heed to his ministry, Col. iv. 17: so did John also to the church of Ephesus, commending it for examining, and so consequently for silencing such, as pretended themselves apostles and were not, Rev. ii. 2; as also to the church of Thyatira, reproving it for suffering unsilenced the false prophetess Jezebel, Rev. ii. 20. Now as these things did first, and principally concern the officers, who were in these, and all other things of the same nature to go before, and govern the people: so were the people also in their places interested in the same business and charge: neither could the officers sin, if they were or should have been, corrupt or negligent, discharge the people of their duty in the things, which concerned them: but they were bound notwithstanding to see the commandments of the apostles, and of the Lord Jesus by them, executed accordingly. And if the people be, in cases, and when their officers fail, thus solemnly to examine, admonish, silence, and suppress their teachers, being faulty, and unsound: then are they also by proportion, where officers fail, to

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elect, appoint, set up, and over themselves, such fit persons, as the Lord affordeth them, for their furtherance of faith and salvation.

In the second place, I do add the conclusion unto the premises lately proved, that since the people of God going out of Babylon must come under the Lord's order, and officers, and may not receive them by succession from the Pope, and his clergy, nor are to expect them immediately from heaven, therefore they themselves are to call and appoint them for the Lord's, and their own service under him.

3. Upon the former ground, that the Lord's people must come out of Babylon, and build anew the Lord's temple in Jerusalem, even themselves, their souls, and bodies, for "a spiritual house," 1 Pet. ii. 5; and that the Levites, and priests of the Lord must minister there, it is necessary, we consider, by the Scriptures, what course hath been taken formerly for the furnishing of this house thus newly built, of the church newly constituted, with officers, where they have wanted.

We do then read, that when that ancient and mother church of the Jews was to be furnished with officers, the Lord commanded Moses to assemble all the congregation of the children of Israel, and to direct them how to offer and freely to give unto the Lord for a shake-offering the Levites, for the first-born, to execute the service of the Lord, Numb. viii. 9—11, 16, 20. Afterwards, when in the apostles' time, one was to be chosen in the room of Judas, Peter standing up in the midst of the disciples, informed them of their liberty, and directed them in the use of it, for the presenting of two, of which, the Lord would single out one to succeed him. Acts i. 15. Likewise in the same story, when deacons were wanting in the church at Jerusalem, the twelve calling the multitude of the disciples together, put them in mind of their liberty, and informed them of their duty for the choosing of so many as were needful, so furnished as is there noted, Acts vi. 2, 3, 5. The same course did Paul and Barnabas afterwards direct the church amongst the Gentiles for the choosing of elders in every city, where they came, Acts xiv. 23. Now if all things which are written before, be

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written for our learning, and for the learning of all the churches, and people of God, Rom. xv. 3; why are not the people, and churches of God, in all places to learn from hence their liberty, and duty, for the choosing of officers, where they are wanting having men thereunto fitted by the Lord? And what hindereth but that the church, the multitude, the disciples, call them as you will, in the fellowship and covenant of the gospel, may be as clearly informed of their duty, and as effectually exhorted to the use of their liberty by the writings of the prophets and apostles, as by their speeches? The apostle, writing to the church of Corinth about the censuring of the incestuous man, though he were absent in body, yet was present in spirit, 1 Cor. v. 3; which was, in effect, all one, and as available to that purpose as his bodily presence should have been: so though Moses and Peter, and Paul, be bodily absent, yet are they in their writings, present in spirit, after a sort, nay God himself in spirit is present in them, with his churches, and people, both for their warrant, direction, and comfort.

Though it be true then which Mr. B. saith, first book, 145; second book, 296, that the people waited till the apostles came; and that they did not elect officers but upon their exhortation: yet, must it also be considered that apostles do now come in their writings, as there they did in corporeal presence, and that they exhort as fully in them now, as they did in speech then. Besides, there are now no apostles upon earth, nor other church officers having the care of all the churches in the world, as the apostles had, 2 Cor. xi. 28; nor that are extraordinarily and miraculously endowed with all gifts, especially with the gift of all tongues, as the apostles were, Acts ii. 1, 3, 4; nor that have the like general commission to teach all nations, as they had. Matt. xxviii. 20. The ordinary officers, which the apostles and evangelists left in the churches, and for the choice of whom, they left order to the world's end, were such elders or bishops as were assigned, and fixed to such particular flocks as they were to feed, under that chief shepherd, and great bishop, Jesus Christ. Besides, if the churches, or people should wait now, as Mr. B. would have them, till the bishops of Rome

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or England came to them, as the apostles did to the churches in their time, to exhort them to choose officers, and to ordain them for them, they might languish under a vain hope, and wait till their eyes failed in their heads.

Whereupon then I do conclude, that if the church without officers may elect, it may also ordain officers: if it have the power and commission of Christ for the one, and that the greater, it hath it also for the other, which is the less. If it have officers, it must use them as hands to put the persons by ordination into that office, to which they have right by election: but if it want officers, it may, and must use other the fittest instruments it hath: as in the natural body, if men want hands, or be deprived of the use of them, they do for their present necessity use their teeth, or feet, or other fittest part of the body, for the business possible to be done by them.

Lastly, If the Lord should raise up in America, or the like place, a company of faithful men and women, which of stones should become children to Abraham, by the reading of the Scriptures, or by some godly men's writings, or, which is most like, by the holy instructions, and exhortations of some merchants, or travellers, how, or by what means should they come by ministers? Must they be sent out of Europe unto them? And if they were, they would be barbarians each to others, 1 Cor. xiv. 11; neither understanding other's language. But what to do, hath the Pope of Rome, or the bishops in England, or the presbytery in Germany, or France to appoint them in America ministers? It is evident that such an assembly, as I speak of, having received the gospel, have received the keys of the kingdom, and the power of Christ: and being joined in this fellowship of the gospel, have the joint use of the keys, and power of Christ: and being within the covenant of Abraham, are the church of God: and so have power to choose, and appoint their own ministers from within themselves. Now, because these things will be better taken at other men's hands, than at ours, yea, it may be with many, through prejudice, their very authority will sway more than our arguments, though never so rightly grounded upon the Scriptures, and common reason, I will therefore here crave leave to bring in a

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few men of singular note both at home, and abroad, to show their judgments in the case in hand.

And I will first bring in one, of our own nation, of great account, and that worthily, with all that fear God, however he were against us in our practice. The man is Mr. Perkins. He then writing about ordination, and succession, in his Commentary upon the Epistle to the Galatians, ch. i. ver. 11, gives this testimony: that, if in Turkey, or America, or elsewhere, the gospel should be received of men, by the counsel and persuasion of private persons, they should not need to send into Europe for consecrated ministers, but had power to choose their own ministers from within themselves: and the reasons of this he renders in the same place, because "where God gives the word, he gives the power also." And I do desire especially his reason may be observed: which is, that, "where God gives the word, there he gives the power also." Whereupon it follows, that any other assembly, whether in America, or Europe, separating themselves from idolatry, whether heathenish or antichristian, and receiving the gospel of Christ, do with the gospel receive the power also: and so may choose their ministers within themselves: and need not send to any other place, no, not to the next parish for consecrated ministers.

In the second place, I will allege one of greater note, and more ancient: and that is Philip Melancthon: who, in his answer to the ministers in Bohemia, which taught the incorrupt doctrine of the gospel, refutes the pretext of ordination to be taken from the bishops, with that of Paul, "If any teach another gospel, let him be an anathema," Gal. i. 8; adding also that "only the assembly where true doctrine soundeth is the church: and that in it is the ministry of the gospel: in it are the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Wherefore in that very assembly, *in eo ipso cœtu*, there is the right of calling, and ordaining the ministers of the gospel, because we must fly the enemies of the gospel, as an anathema. And besides," saith, he, "if we should desire of them the ceremony of ordination, they would not give it, except we would bind ourselves to renounce the true doctrine; and other wicked bonds would they cast upon us. Neither therefore ought the true church to be without pastors, without the keys, without

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the voice of the gospel, without forgiveness of sins, because the tyranny of the bishops either drives away, or refuses to appoint fit ministers. And again, it is the confusion of order to seek shepherds from the wolves. And lastly, this hath ever been the right of the true church, to choose, and call out of her own assembly fit ministers of the gospel." Thus far he.

In the third place Peter Martyr shall speak, who upon the book of Judges, ch. iv. ver. 5, saith thus: "Touching the ecclesiastical ministry we have signified before, that it may not be committed to women, and that they are not fit for it. But now we add, that, in the planting of churches anew, when men want, which should preach the gospel, a woman may perform that, at the first; but so as when she hath taught any company, that some one man of the faithful be ordained, which may afterwards minister the sacraments, teach, and do the pastor's duty faithfully."

Fourthly, Zanchy,* upon the fifth to the Ephesians, treating of baptism, propounds a question of a Turk coming to the knowledge of Christ and to faith, by reading the New Testament, and withal teaching his family, and converting it, and others to Christ; and being in a country, whence he cannot easily come to Christian churches; whether he may baptize them, whom he hath converted to Christ, he himself being unbaptized. He answers, "I doubt not of it, but that he may, and withal provide, that he himself be baptized of one of the three converted by him." The reason, he gives, is, because he is a minister of the Word extraordinarily stirred up of Christ: and so, as such a minister may, with the consent of that small church, appoint one of the communicants, (Symmystam) and provide, that he be baptized by him.

Add in the fifth place Tilenus, who being demanded of the Earl of Lavall, from whom Calvin had his calling, answered, "From the church of Geneva, and from Farell, his predecessor: who had also his, from the people of Geneva; who had right, and authority, to institute, and depose ministers:" which thing he also confirms by Cyprian. Epist. xiv.

The sixth, and last I will name is Sadeel who writing a treatise of purpose, touching the lawful calling of minis-

* Hieronymi Zanchii Opera Theologica, tom. vi. cap. iv. p. 225.

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ters, against such as agreed with the reformed churches in the doctrine they taught, but excepted against them in this, that they had not their ministers by ordinary succession: shows, that amongst, and above other things the ecclesiastical ministry of Rome is corrupted: and makes it a shameless thing, that any boasting of the pure knowledge of God, should object against them, that they did not draw the pure reformation of the ecclesiastical ministry out of the dregs of Popery. The first argument he useth to justify the calling of their ministers is, that they are called, chosen, and received of these assemblies which do appear by manifest signs, and arguments to be true churches: as having the true doctrine of faith, the pure administration of the sacraments, the right and sincere invocation of God's name, observing religiously the discipline instituted by Christ and his apostles: and lastly testifying by the duties of love, constancy of martyrs, and reformation of the whole life, that they are by the great mercy of God, adopted into the number of the faithful, as members of the catholic church, &c.*

And thus much of the ministry, both yours Mr. B. and ours: and more particularly to prove, that an assembly of faithful people separating themselves from heathenish, or antichristian idolatry, have right within themselves to call, and appoint their ministers.

Now from this conclusion thus manifested do arise sundry others worthy the noting down, for the common controversy.

As first, that such an assembly, though without officers, is a true visible church, the kingdom of Christ, and city of God. And I suppose it needs no confirmation to any good conscience, that the choice of church officers is a church action, a main part of the administration of Christ's kingdom, and a privilege of that spiritual city the new Jerusalem: and that such an assembly hath the power of Christ, and from him authority and commission: without which it were intolerable usurpation to presume to choose his officers: especially the chief officers in his kingdom, as are they which administer the Word, and sacraments, of whom we principally entreat.

* Antonii Sadeelis Opera Theologica, Tract xi. p. 41, fol. 1615.

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Secondly, That the people have power to censure offenders: for they that have power to elect, appoint, and set up officers, they have also power, upon just occasion, to reject, depose, and put them down: and so are part of that church, where officers are; and the whole church, where they are not; of which Christ speaketh, Matt. xviii. 17, where he saith, Tell the church. Besides, that the calling of officers, and censuring of offenders are the two main administrations of the kingdom of Christ, and so both of one nature.

Thirdly and lastly, That the brethren out of office, whether in a church furnished with officers, or without them, are not mere private persons; as you Mr. B. and others, would make them, in the exercise of prophecy, calling of ministers, and judging of offenders for scandalous sins. Considering them in deed severally one by one, or in opposition to the public officers, they may be called private persons: but take them jointly, and in these and the like acts of their communion, and they are more than so: and as the church is a public body, so are they members of the body, and parts of the whole, and of the same public nature with it: and not private parts, or members of the public body: which were a senseless contradiction, and contrary to the rule in reason. The whole, and all the parts jointly taken, are the same. When the brethren made choice of Joseph, and Matthias to be presented, Acts i. 23: and afterwards, of the seven deacons, ch. vi. 1: and after that, of the elders in every church, ch. xiv. 23, did they make a private choice of public officers? or could they as private persons merely, make a public choice? When the apostle Paul wrote to the church of Corinth, which you grant to be the multitude, book i. page 92, or body of the church about the censuring of the incestuous person, did he will them to judge and censure him privately for his public scandalous sin? or could they as persons, merely private, pass a public judgment?

The thing then is, that when the church is gathered or come together in one for the administration of the Word, sacraments, censures and other exercises of religion, and parts of God's worship, the officers, if there be any, and brethren with them, are one and the same public body, to

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be exercised in one and the same part of their public communion: and to make the officers, public persons, and the brethren, private in the communion, is to make a schism in the church: and to make the brethren part of the communion, in the administration of the Word, and sacraments, prayer, singing of psalms, contribution, calling of officers, censuring of offenders, or other church action whatsoever, private, and the officers, public, is to make it schismatical, and them in it schismatics.

Thus much of the ninth error objected. The tenth followeth, which is, that we say

Tenth Error.

"Their worship is a false worship," p. 146.

For answer unto this assertion Mr. B. refers us to the end of this treatise; and there then will we attend for it: and yet somewhat will he say against it: and that is, First, "That they worship no false God. Second, That they worship the true God with no false worship."

We charge you not with the worship of any false God, though we shall see by and by how, in one particular, you will defend yourselves. But the thing you should have endeavoured, is, to prove that your divine service-book framed by man, and by man imposed to be used, without addition or alteration, as the solemn worship of your church, is that true and spiritual manner of worshipping God, which he hath appointed: and with which he will be worshipped in spirit, and truth. Of this you say little, or nothing, but because you seem to yourself to say somewhat, we will see what it is.

"The Word, you say, preached, is the true Word: the sacraments, true sacraments: the prayers we pray, whether conceived, or set and stinted, are such as may be warranted by the Word: and agreeable to the prescript form of prayer taught by our Saviour Christ."

The Word preached in popery, or in the most heretical assembly in the world, is the true Word, but the devices of men are not the true Word, either with you or them. Yea the devils themselves preached the true Word, when they affirmed, and published that Jesus was "that Christ, the Son of God, the most High," Luke iv. 41; viii. 28: did

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they therefore perform unto God true worship? Of the sacraments I have spoken formerly, and have showed that in the administration of them, they cannot be reputed true. It is the Word of promise, Eph. v. 26, that makes the sacraments: except then the parish assemblies jointly considered in their members have right unto the spiritual promises of God, the sacraments administered in and unto them in that their estate, cannot so be accounted true sacraments.

For your prayers, I observe sundry things out of your own words, which I may not pass over: as first, that you speak not properly, no, nor truly, in saying you pray stinted prayers, for you read them, and who will say reading is praying? you pray to God, but will you say you read to God? or if you so say, and do, is it agreeable either to his ordinance, or to common reason? Mistake me not, as though I speak of inward prayer, or of the lifting up of the heart: for I grant a man may pray inwardly, or lift up the heart to God, when he reads, or preaches, or sings, or receives the sacraments: of such prayer we neither speak, nor can discern, but in ourselves: our speech then being of the outward act, and ordinance of prayer, I do affirm, and so marvel if all reasonable men concur not with me, that the ordinance of reading cannot be the ordinance of praying.

Second, In your division of prayer, wherein you make some conceived, and some set and stinted, you grant, that the prayers which are set and stinted are not conceived: wherein you do as much as grant, that they are not of God, nor according to his will. The apostle Jude directeth us always to pray in the Holy Ghost, Jude xx.: and Paul teacheth, that we cannot pray as we ought, but as the Spirit helpeth us, and begetteth in us sighs unutterable, Rom. viii. 26; by the work of which Spirit if our prayers be not conceived first in our hearts before they be brought forth in our lips, they are an unnatural, bastardly, and profane birth.

Lastly, If your stinted prayer be, as you say, agreeable to the prescript form of prayer taught by our Saviour Christ, then must none other form of prayer be used but a stinted or set form: for none other form may be used but that

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which is agreeable to the prescript form of Christ: since Christ hath said, "After this manner, pray." Matt. vi. 9.

Where you further add, that nothing is imposed or done by you for the worship of God, but the Word read and preached, and the sacraments and prayer, I demand of you, first, in worship or honour of whom are your holy-days, bearing the names of St. Michael's, St Peter's, St. John's day, and the rest, imposed and kept? if in the honour of the saints and angels, then you are not clear, as you make yourselves, from the worshipping of false gods: neither can you exempt yourselves from the number of them, which in voluntary religion worship angels, Colos. ii. 18, 23: if, on the other side, those days be appointed and so kept holy, in the worship and honour of God, then do you, and that by authority, worship God by, and put holiness in, other things, than the Word read, and preached, and the sacraments, and prayer: yea, and other things, than ever came into the Lord's heart to sanctify for his worship. And so the place Matt. xv. 9, and other scriptures to that purpose are truly, though you say, falsely, alleged against you.

2. I do demand of you, whether your Apocrypha books, namely, that which is placed betwixt both Testaments, causing the Jews to think the New Testament no better than the fables which are joined to it, as a learned man of our nation hath observed,* and the other book of Homilies, be enjoined and used as parts of God's worship? It is evident they are so held. And therefore it is, that a great portion of the former is preferred in the most solemn assemblies before the canonical Scriptures; and the reading of them, before the reading of the other, which they jostle out of their place. And for the Homilies, they are enjoined, and so used, instead of the preaching of the Word which is the principal part of God's worship: whereupon it followeth that the Apocrypha-writings of men, being preferred before one part of God's worship, which is the reading of the canonical Scriptures, and used instead of another part of God's worship, yea and that the principal part, as is preaching, are imposed, and so used, as parts of God's worship.

* "The Works of the Great Albionean Divine," &c., Mr. Hugh Broughton. On the Apocrypha, page 667, fol. edit., 1662.

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So that it is not without good cause, Mr. B. that Mr. Ainsworth bids you prove the Apocrypha-scriptures, and books of Homilies the true Word of God. Nothing, you tell us, is imposed and used amongst you for the worship of God, but the true Word of God read, and preached, and the sacraments, and prayer: now these being imposed, and used for the worship of God, and being neither the preaching of the Word, nor the sacraments, nor prayer, must needs be the true Word of God, and so you must prove them, or else the truth of your assertion is disproved.

Touching your discourse of the order of God's worship before, in, and after the apostles' time, I observe, to let pass other particulars, your error in making the particular synagogues of the Jews, as the particular churches are now. The synagogues were not entire churches of themselves, but parts, or members of the national church: neither could they have use of the most solemn parts of God's worship, as were then the sacrifices: neither could the chief ministers in the church execute their office in them: but as they depended upon the temple in Jerusalem, so were the people to carry their offerings thither, and there to enjoy these ministrations. Deut. xii. 4—6; 1 Chron. xxii. 1—19. But particular congregations now do stand in no such dependency; they may enjoy within themselves the Word, sacraments, and prayer, which are the most solemn services in the church now, and so by consequence, all the rest. Indeed it is with your parish assemblies, somewhat as it was with the synagogues: they cannot enjoy the ministers by, and from within themselves, nor have the use of ecclesiastical government, but must depend upon their Jerusalems, the bishops' chapels, and consistories, for these their most solemn, and peculiar administrations.

Mr. B. in his second book, page 325, to prove their worship true worship, pretends three distinct arguments. The first, Because it is according to the Word of God. Second, Because it is not forbidden in the Scriptures. Third, Because it is after the manner of the worship of the true churches of God, set down in the Word.

Another man would have comprehended these three reasons in one: and so might Mr. B. have done well enough,

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considering his confirmation of them: wherein he brings not so much as one scripture, or reason from Scripture, to prove their prescript liturgy by man devised, and imposed, of which our main question is, to be according to the Word of God, &c. Only in the third argument he toucheth an objection, which he calls a conceit of ours, viz. that it quencheth the Spirit: to which he gives a double answer. First, That it is against known experience: Second, That it is the ground-work of Mr. Smyth's casting of reading the Scriptures in the assembly. Other things he speaks are not worth the insisting upon; let us consider of his answers.

To the former of them, touching known experience, I do reply two things, First, That the experience of supposed good in a course, or by means not warrantable by the written Word of God, is of all godly wise men to be suspected. Second, Though the experience of good be certain, yet must men take heed they honour not one thing for another, as the means of that good; but they must put difference between that which is good, and that which is evil, in the same compound action. Many do avouch they have wrought in them much hatred of murder, treason, and the like evils, by a stage-play: others, that their devotion is much furthered by organ music, and the chanting of choristers, yea, by the prayers in a tongue they understand not: all these will allege their known experience. But to leave these things. The apostle Paul, 1 Cor. xiv. 4, 14, testifieth, that a man "speaking a strange language may edify himself, though not the church, and though he pray in a strange tongue without the understanding, or benefit of the church, yet that his spirit may pray. Might such a man therefore allege his known experience for prayer in a strange tongue, contrary to the apostle's express inhibition? Neither is it any justification of the service-book in the use we speak of, that people do in the reading of it, find by experience, their affections furthered. God may, and doth therein honour the simple, and honest affections of his people so far, as to receive the request of their heart, which he seeth in secret, covering in mercy the outward manner of putting up the same, wherein they of ignorance, or infirmity fail.

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And that these stinted and devised forms do quench the spirit of prayer, appears in that they deprive the church, and minister of that liberty of the spirit of prayer, which God would have them use: stinting the minister, yea, all the ministers in the kingdom, to the same measure of the spirit, not only one with another, but all of them with him, that is dead and rotten: and so stinting the spirit, which the Lord gives his ministers, for his church: and that so strictly, as till the stint be out, it may not suggest one thought or word otherwise; or when it is out, one more, than is prescribed.

The manifestation of the Spirit, saith the apostle, is given to every man to profit withal. 1 Cor. xii. 7. But in the reading of a prescript form of prayer, there is not the manifestation of the spirit of the minister given him to profit the church withal, but the manifestation of the spirit of him, that devised, and penned the service-book.

Now for Mr. B.'s second answer, namely that this conceit of ours, saying that set prayer quencheth the Spirit, is the ground-work of Mr. Smyth's casting of reading the Scriptures in the assemblies: First, He wrongeth Mr. Smyth, who doth not deny the reading of the Scriptures in the assembly, but that the reading of them is properly a part of God's worship. Secondly, Not our conceit, but his own ill collection is the ground-work of his error. Let the indifferent reader judge, whether this consequence be good or no. Because the reading of the Apocrypha prayers of the bishops of Rome or of England, or their chaplains, for prayer, quencheth the Spirit, or is not the true manner of prayer, which Christ hath left; therefore the reading of the canonical Scriptures penned by the prophets, and apostles, for reading, quencheth the Spirit, and is no part of God's worship.

Other observations Mr. B. hath in his answer, page 327, some, nothing to the purpose, and others, against himself: as, for example the Jews in the Old testament did meet together at set times commanded by the Lord: so did the churches of Christ in the New, or the first day of the week. *Ergo*, the Church of England doth well in meeting at set times, yea holy times, not commanded by the Lord, and that far more solemnly, than on the first or Lord's-day. Second,

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The Jews had preaching every Lord's-day, in every synagogue: therefore the Church of England is in good estate, where there is no preaching, or as good as none, in one parish of ten, on the Lord's-day, or at other times, page 328, 329. Third, The Jewish church had singing of the psalms of David, and of other prophetical men: and Christ himself did use the same; therefore the Church of England doth commendably in singing besides them, the Apocrypha songs of men, full of errors, and vanities: as that the saints, and angels in heaven do yet see the wounds, and blood of Christ: * that a sinner need not confess his life, because God knows all things: † and that he need not repeat what he would have, because God knows it before he asks: that the Scripture declares, there was no drop of blood in Christ, which he shed not for sinners: ‡ that the Spirit of Christ did after his burial descend into the lower parts, to them that long were in darkness, the true light of their hearts: § that the sun in the firmament, the heavens, the earth, the sea, and all therein, yea, the spirits beneath, were made for man to rule them.

Sundry Errors.

But these things I pass over, and come to Mr. B.'s second row of errors imputed to us, which he judgeth sufficiently confuted in the former, as also to be so absurd, and false, as that the reading of them is sufficient to make them to be rejected.

The first of them is, that "their congregations, as they stand, are all, and every one of them incapable before God to choose them ministers, though they desire the means of salvation," page 351.

1. Let it here be noted, that Mr. B. in this same book, page 136, compared with page 138, makes it "a rule for the church's making a minister, which must be kept, and from which she may not swerve," that "the guides, and governors of the church do choose one from amongst others," for the ministry. If the guides, and governors, must choose, how

* The Humble Suit of a Sinner.
† Lamentation, Complaint of a Sinner.
‡ Twelve Articles of Faith.
§ Thanksgiving after the Lord's Supper.

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then appertains this to your congregations? or how are they capable of this liberty.

2. If they be capable of this liberty, why do they not use it? There is no congregation in the land, which as a church, chooseth their minister: the patron, and bishop have seized this liberty, and at their courtesy doth the congregation stand to receive either a preacher, or dumb priest: either a man of some conscience, or without all fear of God, or common honesty, whom they may not refuse. And if some parishes choose, it is not as churches, but as patrons. They have purchased the right of patronage with their money, and so use it. But what is this to that spiritual liberty, and charter of Christ's spiritual kingdom the church?

3. I deny that any congregation in the land desires the means of salvation. I speak of the congregation, which is the whole consisting of the parts jointly considered. The best parish hath too many in it that "love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." John iii. 19. This you find true in your own, Mr. B. which you deem one of the best. And what right hath such an assembly to choose a minister, which hath no right to his ministrations of the sacraments, and other holy things? Because the Lord Jesus hath given his power, and charter to his subjects for the choice of their officers whether many, or few, doth it therefore follow that the subjects of sin, and Satan, professed traitors unto his Majesty, have the same liberty? or can his subjects combine with them that are, and always have been such, in the use, or rather in the usurpation of that Divine privilege? These things, Mr. B. you extenuate because you want them, but the churches of Christ account them precious things: which they therefore labour to preserve pure.

Of your false worship something hath been before, and more shall be hereafter spoken; and you do idly make it a distinct error from the tenth.

That baptism is not administered into the faith of Christ simply, but into the faith of bishops and Church of England, which you make our 3rd error, do we not affirm, but leave it to him for justification, which not content with that in England received, hath found out since a second or third, as he supposeth, better than that was.

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We are to consider, baptism first, and principally in relation from GOD to us, and as a seal of the covenant of grace into which he hath received us: and secondly, in relation from us to God, and as we re-stipulate, or promise again unto him. In the first respect, it is effectual upon the very infants of the faithful, though for the present wanting faith: and in the second, both may be, and is upon such as err in many great points of faith: otherwise the baptism ministered by John into the faith of Christ which came after him could not have been true unto many which received it, being ignorant a long time after of the very kingdom, and office of Christ. Acts xix. 4. To conclude then, since the essential form of institution is retained in the baptism in England, and the doctrine of the Trinity sincerely held, into whose name all persons are baptized indefinitely, the particular errors in that church touching the manner of worshiping God, or touching the uses or ends of baptism (which are not of the essence) cannot make the baptism in itself cease to be indefinite.

Of the 4th error imputed unto us, namely, that we hold your faith, and repentance false, I say as of the third: and doubt not, but the personal faith, and repentance of very many men and women there, according to the measure of knowledge, and grace received, is true, and sincere before God: yea and so visibly declared, and manifested to be before men, in respect of their persons: notwithstanding all the evils in their church communion and ordinances.

Your 5th exception, viz., that your ministers convert men not as pastors, but as teachers, is neither our error, nor assertion, but your own misconstruction. This we hold, that the conversion of men with you is no way to be ascribed to your office, which it justifieth not: but to the truths of God taught amongst you, by the special blessing of God upon them, notwithstanding the other evils wherewith they are mingled inseparably amongst you.

To your demand what idol you worship, because we affirm your church to stand in an adulterous estate,

I do answer that you may stand in an adulterous estate, though you worship the true God only, if you do it after a devised manner: as indeed you do in your government,

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ministry, service-book, and ceremonies; which being all properly matters of religion and not commanded by the Lord, are devices of your own against the 2nd commandment, which forbids nothing but idolatry.

Your 7th insinuation against us, is, "that we cannot say certainly by any warrant of God's Word, that any of you have either faith or fear of God." Wherein you censure us, as "having lost the feeling of former grace, and all true charity."

Mr. Smyth in his "Parallels" shows your fraud, and evil dealing with him in this case, whom you name in your margin. And I further add, that I do not only in the general believe there are many such, but am so persuaded in the particular of many I know, yet so to say certainly of any of you, I cannot, nor of ourselves neither, by the Word of God. A man can say this only of himself certainly, because he only knows his own heart: but of others morally, and in the judgment of charity, which is according to outward appearance, and which may deceive.

The 8th and 9th errors imputed to us are, that we hold none of their ministers may be heard: and that it is not lawful to join in prayer with any of them.

Sundry things Mr. B. brings to evince the former position of error, but not one of them so much as tending to prove it lawful to partake in an office of ministry either devised or usurped without lawful calling, as that in England hath been proved to be. It is not true then which he saith, that we censure any for hearing the Word: we do it for partaking in other men's sins, 1 Tim. v. 22: and for receiving the mark of the beast, in communicating with the ministry of Antichrist, Rev. xviii. 4; xiv. 9; as we assuredly know yours to be in the office, and entrance into it, notwithstanding the truths taught, and personal graces in the teachers, and for obstinacy in the same. It is true, then, but not pertinent, which Mr. B. saith, that it is a good thing to hear the Word: which who denies but the Church of England that silenceth the preachers of it for her own, and the Pope's inventions? and that tieth the people to their unpreaching parish priests, rather than permits them to hear a preacher in the next parish?

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False Teachers.

Other things objected by him, 1st book, pages 153, 154, are elsewhere handled, yet seems it not amiss to add something touching three scriptures by him produced, and applied to his purpose, and they are, Matt. xxiii. 1—3; Phil. i. 15, 18; Tit. iii. 10, 11.

And first, There is not one of these scriptures that gives so much as any colour or countenance to the hearing of the Word ministered in a false church, devised office, and by virtue of an unlawful calling; or where any of these bars are put: and by all these we do believe and affirm ourselves to be kept from hearing you. And this general defence I do apply unto the particulars, and first, to the first: answering, that the scribes and pharisees did neither minister to any but the Lord's people, the Israel of God, nor in an unlawful place, nor by an unlawful entrance, how corruptly soever they ministered: and for corrupt administrations, besides the constitution, in the true church, we do not think the ministers are either suddenly or unorderly to be forsaken. To which I do add further, first, that the words "do sit in Moses' chair, and whatsoever they bid you, do," may more strictly, after the Greek, be turned, have sat in Moses' chair, and have bidden you observe, that is, what you have heard of them formerly according to Moses, that do and observe. But let the words be as they are, and that Christ speaks of the time to come, yet I see not how in them, the Lord either commands, or approves of his disciples hearing the scribes and pharisees, in their public and solemn administrations: but if he speaks of them, then he may only permit his disciples in respect of their weakness, and being, for the present, too much addicted unto them, so to hear them: or otherwise Christ may speak of such occasional meetings and conferences as passed ordinarily between the pharisees and his disciples: wherein what was of Moses, he wills them to receive from them without prejudice of their persons: and so we do also will and exhort the people with us to receive, and retain whatsoever of God they hear from you, or any others upon the like occasion. And considering that, in the first verse, Christ spake unto the multitude, and to his disciples, Matt. ix. 11; xvii. 10; xxiii. 1, laying no more upon his disciples

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in this case, than upon the multitude, and what respect the disciples had the pharisees in, and how oft, and usually they met and meddled together, it is very probable that Christ, upon this supposition, that the disciples would, or should hear, or meet with them, intends only to provide, that the Word of God may retain all due authority with his, in that confused estate wherein all things then stood: neither commanding nor approving the hearing of them.

And, considering what Christ himself testifieth of the scribes and pharisees in that very chapter, Matt. xxiii. 13, 15, that they shut up the kingdom of heaven before men, neither going in themselves, nor suffering them that would: making those of their profession twofold more the children of hell than themselves: what heresies they taught touching justification by works, and perfect obedience to the whole law, how they made void the commandments of God for their own traditions; how they denied in Christ both the person, and office of the Messiah: blaspheming him in his doctrine as a deceiver of the people; in his life, as a glutton and drinker of wine; and in his most glorious miracles as one that wrought them by the devil; considering I say these things, it should be strange that Christ should either send his disciples to be taught by these "blind guides," or approve of their hearing them, himself also being the only doctor and teacher of his church, ver. 16. And this I would know of you, Mr. B. and of others which urge this scripture, as here you do, whether you would like it well or be content, that your disciples should hear any such corrupt, heretical, and blasphemous teachers, as were the scribes and pharisees, and that denied both the office and person of Christ, as they did. You yourself teach in this very page (154) that obstinate heretics are not to be heard; and such were the pharisees, yea, so maliciously obstinate in their heresies, as that the Lord Jesus insinuates against them, the very sin of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, Matt. xii. 31. If then you yourselves would not allow your disciples to hear teachers far less corrupt, and heretical than were the scribes and pharisees, to what purpose do you produce, and insist upon Christ's allowance of his disciples to hear them? Is this fitly to allege the Scriptures, or not rather to take God's name in them in vain?

To the other scripture, which is Phil. i. 15, 16, answer

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hath been given both by others, and by myself formerly: and I now do add, that those there spoken of, which "preached Christ of envy, and strife," had corrupt inward affections so appearing to the apostle by that special spirit of discerning which was in him, though not so discovered unto others: but what makes this to such as minister in an office devised, and by an entrance found out by Antichrist, and so left to them, which think his mark a privilege.

Touching your third argument, which is from Tit. iii. 10, 11, I do first observe your grant, that private persons, and such as are not in office, may reject obstinate heretics, and so, by consequence, that the things, which Paul writes to Timothy and Titus touching the reformation of abuses, and censuring of offenders, do not concern the officers only, much less the chief officers, but even the brethren also in their places. Secondly, There is no consequence in your argument, that because obstinate heretics may not be heard, therefore usurpers may. You might as sensibly argue thus: because a fornicator must not be eaten with, but judged by the church, therefore a covetous person, an idolater, a railer may be eaten with, and must not be judged, contrary to the apostle's express writing. 1 Cor. v. 11, 12.

In your ninth charge, namely that we hold it not lawful to join in prayer with any of you, and in your comment upon it, you do us a double injury; first, in saying we approve not of any of your praying for us: secondly, That we pray for you only as we do for Jews, Turks, and Papists. For as we are persuaded we fare the better for the prayers of many amongst you, and so both approve of, and desire the same; so do we also pray for many as for the Lord's people in Babylon, and that they may at the Lord's call, go out of her, Rev. xviii. 2, 4: and that as they are holy in their persons, so they may be also in their church communion, and ordinances.

Now for the point itself: and first for your reason by which you would prove it erroneous. If, say you, we hold any of you the children of God, then our Saviour hath taught us to join with you in prayer, and to say, "Our Father" with you.

You do write in another place of this book, page 114, that a man justly excommunicated, and cast out "is to be

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held a brother," and so consequently a child of God; for the brethren of the saints, are the children of God; whereupon if your argument in this place, and position in the former place, be good, it must be lawful to join in prayer with a man justly excommunicated. I do answer, then, that it is true you say, we ought to communicate both in prayer, and in all the other ordinances of God with all God's children except they themselves hinder it, or put a bar: which we are persuaded they in the Church of England do, in choosing rather the communion of all the profane rout in the kingdom under the prelates' tyranny, than the communion of saints, which Christ hath established, under his government. So that it is not we which refuse them, but they us, binding us either to practise as we do, or to communicate in one spiritual body with all the graceless persons, and vile miscreants in the kingdom. For as he which hath hold of any one member of the natural body is not separated from the body, but holdeth the whole and every member by coherence, so he which is joined in communion with one member of the church, is by coherence joined with the whole church, and every member of it.

Christ's Appointments to be observed.

We do profess it is not in neglect of the graces of God, which we acknowledge to be eminent in many, that we deny communion with them: but only in conscience of the order which Christ hath set: and in testimony against the disorder which Antichrist hath brought into, and left in the world. The order which the Lord hath set, is, that those which fear him should be of a true visible church rightly gathered, Acts ii. 41, 47; 1 Cor. i. 2; Phil. i. 1: and that any such should be out of the true church, or commingled with all the profane atheists in a kingdom, is a main part of Antichrist's confusion. Now, if God hath set us in the orderly communion of a church, we must not break our order for other men's disordered courses. Communion is a matter of order, and relation, standing in the orderly combining of the graces of God in two faithful persons, or more. And how far order ought to prevail with men in this case let these particulars manifest.

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One of the church commits some notable sin known to me alone, which, being dealt with by me, he denies; and without "two or three witnesses," the church may not proceed against him, Deut. xix. 15; Matt. xviii. 16; I must therefore still communicate with the church, and so with him as a member of it, till God so far discover him as he can be orderly dealt with, and till the Lord lead him forth with the workers of wickedness, Psa. cxxv. 5. And as I am to communicate with an ungodly man, with whom I am orderly joined in the church, till I can be orderly disjoined from him: so by proportion I am to forbear communion with a godly man out of the church, until I be orderly joined unto him. Further, put the case a man be excommunicated in mine absence upon the testimony of two or three witnesses, and that I know he is injured, and am able to manifest his innocency to all men: yet will I for order sake, and so am bound, forbear communion with him for the present, till his innocency be by me sufficiently cleared. Matt. xviii. 15—17; 1 Cor. v. 11, 12. Now if for order, I must refuse communion with him, which is put out of the church for well-doing, by the sin of others, how much more with him that keeps out himself by his own default and sin? So that the holiness of a man's person is not sufficient for communion, but withal it must be ranged into the order of a church, wherein both his person and actions must combine, and under whose censure they must come: whereas this other unorderly course destroys the censures, which by Christ's appointment, do extend to every brother whosoever.

These things I do desire the godly reader indifferently, and without offence to take knowledge of: and to rest in this our defence, if it be found according to the Word of God: if not, to give us knowledge by the same Word of the contrary, wherein we shall willingly rest, and (by the grace of God) so practise.

Ministers should not be required to celebrate Marriage.

Our tenth reckoned error, is that ministers may not celebrate marriage nor bury the dead. And this Mr. B. affirms we say, but without scriptures.

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First, You that charge our opinion with error, should so have proved it by the Scriptures, or some reasons from them. Secondly, You speak against your own knowledge, having seen our writings: especially our Apology, where, in the third petition to the King, and the fourth branch of the sixth position, there are almost twenty several scriptures, and nine distinct reasons grounded upon them, to prove, that the celebration of marriage, and burial of the dead are not ecclesiastical actions, appertaining to the ministry, but civil, and so to be performed. You yourself, Mr. B. both affirm and prove in this book, page 131, from 1 Cor. xii. 4, that "the Lord only prescribes the duties to be done in every distinct office of ministry in the church." And the apostle testifieth that the Scriptures, being divinely inspired, do make perfect, and fully furnished, the man of God, or minister, to every good work of his calling. 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. Now I suppose, Mr. B. will not be so ill-advised, as to go about to prove that the celebration of marriage, and burial of the dead, are duties prescribed by the Lord Jesus to be done in the pastor's office, or that the Scriptures lay this furniture upon the man of God for the proper works of his office. They are then other spiritual lords than the Lord Christ, that prescribe these duties to be done by their men, furnished by other scriptures than the Divine Scriptures, the bishops' scriptures, their canons and constitutions: whereby they are fully furnished indeed, with ring, surplice, service-book, and other priestly implements for the business.

The apostle Paul, Eph. iv. 8, 11, 12, teacheth, that when Christ ascended on high, he gave unto men such gifts, that is, such ministers of the church, as should serve for the repairing of the saints and edification of his body, till the work of grace were perfected in all his: and so he makes the work of the ministry, and the edification of the body of Christ all one. Now who will say that the celebration of marriage, or burial of the dead are in themselves matters of edification, or which further the unity of faith. They serve for the general administration of the world, and so are lawful amongst Turks, and heathens, as to eat, and drink, or to perform any other natural or civil work: and not for the special administration of the church, or

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body of Christ, and therefore no works of the ministry, which is peculiar unto the church.

The church is a religious society, and so the ministry which is given to the church is a religious calling, and so the proper works of the ministry must needs be works of religion: which if marriage or burying the dead were, then were it unlawful for a faithful husband to communicate with his wife being an infidel, or excommunicate, in the duties of marriage: or for a brother being a faithful person to join with his brother being an infidel, or excommunicate, in the burial of their dead father, for with such persons religious communion may not be kept, whereas the Scriptures do commend unto us these duties so performed, both as lawful, and necessary, Gen. xxv. 9; xxxv. 29; 1 Cor. vii. 10—14. These are then civil duties, and so practised by the servants of God in all ages: whose practice also for our learning is recorded in the Scriptures, and commended unto us accordingly, Gen. xxiv. 50, 51, 58, 59, 67; xxv. 34; Ruth iv. 1, 2, 5, 9—13; Matt. xxvii. 57, 59, 60; Acts viii. 2.

On Tithes or Offerings.

Whether it be an error in us, as in the eleventh place we are accused, to hold: that ministers ought not to live of tithes and offerings, but of the people's voluntary contribution, let the reader, considering what is answered both by Mr. Ainsworth,* and Mr. Smyth,† and what is more fully written in the book before named,‡ judge.

But this saith Mr. B. is against the wisdom of God, who alloweth a settled maintenance under the law: and there is nothing against it in the gospel.

But say I, as the Lord appointed under the law a settled maintenance by tithes and offerings, so did he a settled land of Canaan, which was holy, and a sacrament: so did he also appoint that the Levites to be maintained there should have no part, nor inheritance with the rest of the Israelites their brethren, Deut. xviii. 1—4. And hath God's wisdom so appointed now? If it had I fear many would not rest in it, so wise are they for their

* In his Counterpoison, &c. † In his Parallels, &c.
‡ Apology, Posit. 7.

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bellies. And where you add, that there is nothing in the gospel against this ordinance in the law, the author to the Hebrews might have taught you, that the law is abolished by the gospel, in the sense we speak of: and the old testament by the new, in respect of ordinances: whereof this was one. If it be said that tithes were in use, and given by Abraham to Melchizedec priest of the most high God, Gen. xiv. 18, 20; before the law, or old testament was given by Moses, I do answer, that so was circumcision ministered, and sacrifices offered before Moses: which notwithstanding were parts of the old testament, and assumed by Moses into the body of it, and so are abolished by the new.

To conclude this point, since tithes and offerings were appurtenances unto the priesthood, and that the priesthood both of Melchizedec, and Levi are abolished in Christ, as the shadow in the substance, and that the Lord hath ordained that they which preach the gospel, should live of the gospel, we do willingly leave unto you both your priestly order, and maintenance, contenting ourselves with the peoples' voluntary contribution, whether it be less or more, as the blessing of God upon our labour, the fruit of our ministry, and a declaration of their love and duty. Psal. cx. 4; Heb. vii. 17.; viii.; ix.; 1 Cor. ix. 14.

On the Overthrow of the Churches.

The twelfth, and last error imputed to us, is, that your churches, as you call them, ought to be rased down, and not to be employed to the true worship of God. Our main reason of this assertion, being, as you say, by making equal Paganism, and Antichristianism, you endeavour to weaken by sundry exceptions. As 1. That there is great difference between Antichristianism and Paganism, for this is the worshipping of a false God, and without any profession of the true God: but the other worship the true God, and hold many truths of God. Paganism was wholly without the church, but Antichrist sits in the church of God, &c. 2. That we are to prove your churches to have been built by Antichrist.

We do not make equal Paganism and Antichristianism, in the degree, though we put not such difference between

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them as you do. And first, we do affirm, that both the one, and the other, are not only against that second commandment, but the first also. Second, that both of them may, in their degree, and for a time, be in the church: as also that both of them may in time, and in their degree, destroy the true church of Christ. Thirdly, that as well the relics, ornaments, and monuments of the one, as of the other are by lawful authority to be abolished: and in the mean while to be forborne, especially in the worship of God, by all such as fear him, and his judgments denounced against the same, let us hear what the Scriptures teach in these cases.

The apostle Paul writing purposely of that man of sin Antichrist, testifieth, that he is an adversary and exalteth himself against all that is called God, or that is worshipped: so that he sitteth in the temple of God as God, shewing himself, that he is God. 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4. And as Antichrist cannot be rightly discerned of us, but in his opposition unto Christ, and exaltation above him, so doth this his exaltation appear sundry ways, by which he doth translate unto himself the honour due unto God alone, and his Son our Lord Christ: as in dispensing with the moral law professedly, binding and loosing conscience, devising and imposing forms of religion, transferring empires and kingdoms; and all these doth this earthly god, as he is called, by the plenary power of the seat apostolical. The same also it was, which John foresaw in the Revelation, namely, that the Antichristians worshipped devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and wood, which can neither see, nor hear, nor walk, and again, that they worshipped the beast, which came out of the earth, and the image of the beast, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, and received his mark in their right hand, and in their foreheads. Rev. ix. 20; xiii. 15, 16. And is the man of sin, and devils, idols, the beast, all which Antichristians worship, the true God? Or is that notable idol their breaden god in the sacrament of the altar, which they so much adore, the true God? Yea, are the Virgin Mary, and other saints, to whom they pray, go in pilgrimage and perform other devotions, and in whose honour they have built the very temples we speak

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of, the true God? Oh, Mr. B., that you should be drawn to this plea for Rome? Surely the hand of God is upon you, and it is a fearful thing you feel it not.

And as Antichristianism doth not worship the true God only, but false gods, or such as are no gods, with him: and therefore is both against the second and first commandment as hath been said: so neither is Paganism, as you speak, without all profession of the true God. To let pass that the learned of our nation have proved the contrary against the papists, pleading for themselves, as you do for them, that they worshipped only the true God, that which is written 2 Kings xvii. 6, 24, if there were no more scriptures, doth sufficiently manifest your error. It is there said, that the king of Ashur, taking Samaria, and carrying away Israel to Ashur, brought from Babylon, and other heathenish countries, folk, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel. And in the same place it followeth, that those Babylonians, and other pagans retaining still their paganism, and worshipping, as before, the gods of their own nations, did withal worship Jehovah, the true God. 2 Kings xvii. 27—29, 32, 33.

Of like truth with the former is that which followeth, namely, that Paganism was wholly without the church, but that Antichrist sits in the church of God.

For first, admit it to be true of Paganism in the land of Canaan, before the Israelites entered into it, yet afterwards it was otherwise, as the Scriptures testify, Psa. cvi. 35—38; and got too great footing in the church, in that place as it had done before in all places. Second, it is not true you say that Antichrist sits in the church of God: he sits in his own church, into which the church of God is degenerated: though there remain usurped sundry things still, which are of God. It is a great untruth to affirm that the popish synagogue in the present state is the true visible church of God, unto which he hath promised his presence, and given his power. As Paganism hath subverted other churches, so hath Antichristianism that church long ago.

And here I would demand of Mr. B., what he judgeth of the Israelites in, and after Jeroboam's apostacy, especially in the time of Ahab and Jezebel, when Baal was especially

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worshipped, and temples and altars reared up unto him in Samaria? 1 Kings xviii. 30—32. Doth he judge them at that time plain pagans? Or was their worship simple paganism? I see not but, as the religion of the papists, in the opposition it hath to Christianity, is rightly called Antichristianism, so the religion of the ten tribes, in the opposition it had to the law given by Moses, may fitly be called Anti-judaism. And for the Baalims then and there worshipped, they were even as the lesser gods at this day, which are called patrons, amongst the papists. The devil to the end he might bring in again the old idolatry, craftily borrowing the names of the holy apostles, and martyrs, by whom it was in former times overthrown, and driven away: and by this means it hath put on another person, that it might not be known. Whereupon it followeth by proportion, that as the temples, altars, and high places, for those Baalims, and other idols, were by godly kings to be rased down and taken away, Deut. xii. 1—3; 2 Kings x. 25—28; xviii. 1, 3, 4; and no way to be employed to the true worship of God, so are the temples, with their appurtenances, built to the Virgin Mary, Peter, Paul, and the rest, though true saints, yet the papists' false gods, and very Baalims, to be demolished and overthrown by the same lawful authority, and in the meanwhile as execrable things to be avoided by them which have none authority to deface, or demolish them.

Now, howsoever the difference put by Mr. B., is neither true, nor to the purpose, if it were true, yet, do I grant a difference, not in respect of the things, but of the times, and that there was something legal in many of the commandments given by Moses touching these, and the like execrable things: yet so as there is one, and the same general and common equity, binding the Jews then, and us now: and that, I consider in two respects; the one in the detestation of idolatry past; and the other in the prevention of it for the time to come. And, as the godly under the law were to show their detestation of idolatry, by defacing and abandoning the monuments, relics, and remembrances of it: so are they now to manifest in the same manner, their just, and zealous hatred of the same, or like impieties: and as the kings, and mighty of the

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earth have, in former times, given their power unto the beast, and adorned the purple-coloured whore with many ornaments, and with stately temples, and edifices amongst the rest, so shall they in the day of her full visitation, strip her naked of these, amongst her other ornaments, and leave her desolate. Now for the second reason: who is ignorant how many thousands in the land are most dangerously nourished in their erroneous, and superstitious persuasions by the houses themselves, to let pass the particular both memorials of and incitements unto idolatry still appearing in some places more, and in some less, knowing none other church, to which God hath promised his special presence, and wherein he will be glorified, save in that of lime, and stone, and putting holiness in the very place? And how well your church provides for this, appears in sundry things; as in whiting the walls of the houses, where you silenced the preachers: in binding the people absolutely to the places, though little care be taken what either they, or the ministers to whom they come, do there, so they deal not too faithfully in the Lord's business: in tying Christian burial absolutely to the church, or churchyard, where the minister, with all his holy implements, must meet the corpse at the church stile, and so with singing and saying,* as is apppointed, admit it into the holy ground. And, lastly, in teaching the people, that by keeping their churches in good repair, they shall not only please God, and deserve his manifold blessings, but also deserve the good report of all godly people.† And for the Papists, all men know what claim they lay unto the places, as indeed they do far better fit their pompous religion, than the simplicity of the gospel, what new life they continually receive from them, what religion they put in them, and what devotion they have unto them, ever by how much the more superstitiously bent, by so much the more devoutly addicted unto them. And so far is that from truth which you say, Mr. Bernard, page 157, that the godly and church of God have in Popery kept possession of those buildings for the godly which should follow them; that, as they were erected by such as were most superstitiously seduced, so have they been ever since the proper

* Service Book. † Homilies, vol. ii.

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possessions of the most dangerous seducers in the Romish synagogue, the prelates, and their clergy.

So that the moral equity of those commandments in the Old Testament touching the demolition and subversion of idolatrous temples, and other the like superstitious monuments, doth as well bind now as then. Which commandments are also in effect renewed in the New Testament, where the faithful are charged to touch none unclean thing; to keep themselves from idols, which they cannot do, except they keep themselves from their appurtenances: to hate even the garment spotted by the flesh, 2 Cor. vi. 17; 1 John v. 21; Jude 23: not to receive the least mark of the beast, but to go out of Babylon, which is also called Sodom and Egypt spiritually, as for other sins reigning in her, so, for her idolatry amongst the rest, Rev. xiv. 9; xviii. 4; xi. 8: which I the rather note, that men may see it is not we, but the Holy Ghost, that compares together paganish and antichristian idolatry.

Lastly, Where Mr. Bernard bids us prove that their churches were built by Antichrist, their records, as Mr. Ainsworth observeth, will prove it: so will their situation directly east and west, with the choir, or chancel, always at the east end, and the rood-loft in the middle to separate it from the body of the church, the profane laity: their vacant places for images abolished, and their popish pictures still remaining: and, lastly, their names, even the names of the apostles, saints, and martyrs in whose honour they were built, and to whose peculiar service they were consecrated.

Thus much of the temples, which is the last difference betwixt Mr. B. and me, and I confess the least; and this much also of his book. Something remains to be spoken of "the ministers' positions,"* but very briefly, both because the things in them for substance, have come formerly into consideration, and also because Mr. B. affords them no confirmation in his second book, being shaken by Mr. Ainsworth, as they are.

* An Appendix to Mr. Bernard's Work.

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CHAPTER IV.

THE MINISTERS' POSITIONS EXAMINED.

AND to omit the bloody doom which these ministers pass upon us all, contrary I am persuaded to their own consciences, that we are cut off from Christ, for our separation from the Church of England, I will consider briefly of their reasons to prove it a true church.

The Ministers' Charges—Congregationalists separated from Christ.

The first is, because "they enjoy, and join together in the use of those outward means, which God in his Word hath ordained for the gathering of an invisible church, which are, preaching of the gospel, and administration of the sacraments:" which they will prove by the unfeigned conversion of many: and by the scriptures, Matt. xxviii. 18, 20; Eph. iv. 11, 14.

1. The Church of England: namely, the national church, under a national government and ministry, is a popish device: the Lord having appointed none other church, under the New Testament but a particular congregation, as these ministers truly understand, Matt. xviii. 17, with a government and ministry correspondent. *Vide* page 180.

2. Before men join together, as a church in the fellowship of the gospel, and communion of saints, in the ordinances of God, they should be prepared by the preaching of the Word, and fitted as spiritual stones for the Lord's building, and so join in covenant, by voluntary, and personal profession of faith, and confession of sins: from which how far the body of the national Church of England both is, and ever hath been, all know.

3. As the sacraments are no means to gather either the visible, or invisible church, but do presuppose a church gathered already into covenant with God, of which covenant they are seals: so doth not the Church of England join together in the preaching of the doctrine of faith which is the outward means for the gathering of the church.

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The greatest part of the parishes, as they have only the service-book for prayer, so have they only the homilies for preaching. And even in the parishes where the Word is best taught, and the sacraments most orderly administered, yet do not men join in the use, but in the abuse of these ordinances: considering the confused communion wherein, the usurped authority by which, and the book-service according to which, they are dispensed. If the ministers had only affirmed, that they had taught amongst them such truths of the gospel, as by which the Lord might, and did sanctify, and save his elect, or gather an invisible church, as they speak, I should not contend with them, but should further add, that I doubt not but such truths are even in many assemblies of papists, and anabaptists, and to hold otherwise is a foul and cruel error: but where they speak of enjoying the outward means, and by them understand the offices of ministry which Christ hath given unto his church, for the gathering and feeding of the same for which purpose they allege, Matt. xxviii. 18, 20; Eph. iv. 11, 14; I deny they enjoy the outward means ordained for the gathering of the church; neither shall they ever be able to prove it, except they can prove themselves lawfully, and according to Christ's testament possessed of some of the offices there spoken of.

In the fourth place I would know the cause, why these ministers speak of the outward means of gathering an invisible church, and not of a visible, since both the question betwixt them and us, is about the visible, and not about the invisible church, and also that the scriptures they bring for the justification of these means amongst them, do speak of the means, and ministries given not to the invisible, but to the visible church; and if it be not, because they know, that if they had spoken of the means of gathering the visible church we would, and that justly, have excepted, that they do not enjoy, nor have not so much as taught amongst them, those doctrines of the gospel, and that part of Christ's testament, which teacheth the right, and orderly gathering of the visible church, by separation of the saints from the unsanctified world into the covenant, and fellowship of the gospel, by free, and personal profession of faith, and confession of sins.

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Lastly, As the preaching of the gospel is the only outward means to gather a church, so, though this means be used never so fully, and men enjoy it, and join in it never so ordinarily, yet except withal they join in the understanding, faith, obedience of, and submission unto it, and that, in the order which Christ hath set, they are not made a church by it, according to the right use of it, but do make themselves, by abusing it, a conventicle of profane usurpers, Matt. xiii. 19; John x. 3—5; Acts ii. 41, 42; viii. 36, 37; x. 35; xi. 20, 21, 23, 24, 26; Col. ii. 5; howsoever Mr. B. and these ministers, and many others do indeed make the Word of God a very charm, in writing and teaching that the bare use, they might say, the abuse, of the Word, and sacraments by a company of people either altogether, or for the most part for fear, fashion, or with opinion of merit *ex opere operato*, and without all knowledge, or conscience, makes them a true church of Christ. The argument from the external efficient, except it work absolutely necessarily, to the effect, is unsound. It were senseless to affirm, that because physic is the means of recovering health, therefore, whosoever use physic are healed: much more to affirm, that because the Word is the means to gather a church, whosoever use it are a church; since physic is a natural agent, and worketh by a natural power given it of God; where the Word is a moral agent, having in itself no natural virtue, but working merely by the will of the author, and supernatural efficacy of the Spirit, which like the wind, bloweth where it listeth. John iii. 8.

The two next reasons, being indeed one in effect, which the ministers bring for the justification of their church are, 1, that their whole church maketh profession of the true faith; for proof of which they refer us to the confession of their church; the apology of it; and the articles of religion agreed upon in the convocation-house, A.D. 1562; 2, that they hold, teach, and maintain every part of God's holy truth, which is fundamental and such, as without the knowledge and believing whereof there is no salvation. All which afterwards they reduce to this one head, as the only fundamental truth of religion, that Jesus Christ the Son of God who took our nature by the Virgin Mary, is our

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only, and all-sufficient Saviour: which truth, say they, whosoever receive, are the people of God, and in the estate of salvation: they that receive it not, cannot possibly be saved. Matt. xvi. 18; Mark xvi. 16; 1 John iv. 2; Col. ii. 7.

These two arguments, for substance, have been handled in the former part of the book;* unto which also Mr. Ainsworth hath given answer in the particulars: of which I entreat the reader to take knowledge: and do thereunto annex these considerations.

Essential Truths.

First, It is a very presumptuous thing for these ministers, yea, or for any men or angels thus peremptorily to determine how much knowledge a man must have to be saved: that if he have just so much, then he may be, or is in the state of salvation: if he want any of that, he cannot be saved. Who knows by how little knowledge the Lord may, and doth save a man, that is faithful in the little he knows, and endeavours by all means to further knowledge, and so to further faithfulness? As on the contrary, the Lord rejects many with greater knowledge, for their unfaithfulness, both in not practising the things they know, and in neglecting to know more, lest they should learn that truth, which they have no mind to practise for fear, or in other corrupt regards.

And, howsoever, I do acknowledge a difference of truths, and that some are more, and some less principal, yet do I wish more conscience in the application of this distinction. For, whereas the ministers are by the laws and penalties, civil and ecclesiastical, limited in their doctrine; and both the ministers, and people in their obedience of, and to the truth of the gospel, and ordinances of the New Testament, this is made a salve for every sore, that they have the substance of the gospel; the doctrine of faith: all fundamental truths: and whatsoever is necessary to salvation. In which defence (as it is made) there are these evils.

1. In it men not only endeavour, which is too much, the curing of Babel, but indeed to make Babel believe she stands in no great need of curing: and that her wounds are neither deadly, nor dangerous.

* *Vide* pp. 273, 4, 284, 5, 6, *supra*.

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2. It tends to vilify, and make of small moment many of the Lord's truths, and ordinances, howsoever these ministers, pages 173, 174, will not hear of it. And this will appear, if the end be considered of these distinctions, and qualifications: which is, that men should settle themselves, without pressing further in the disobedience and want of sundry of the commandments, and ordinances of Christ Jesus, till with bodily peace, and leave the magistrate, they might enjoy the same. And if the Scribes and Pharisees were reproved of Christ for making the commandments of God of none authority by their traditions, Matt. xv. 6, do not they make the commandments of God, and ordinances of Christ of small moment, who for the traditions, and inventions of men, yea, of that man of sin, though supported by the arm of flesh, have forborne, and do forbear, and, so purpose to go on, the obedience of the same? Which whether it be not the very estate of these ministers in forbearing to preach, that I may let pass other matters, for the refusal of subscription, and conformity, let their own consciences judge. And mark their defence, page 174. They believe, and teach that there is no part of the Holy Scripture, which every Christian is not necessarily bound to seek, and desire the knowledge of, so far forth as in him lieth. Here is a great charge laid upon every Christian to seek the knowledge of every part of Holy Scripture: but no word of his obedience unto every part of it: as if Christ had not sent out his apostles to teach men to observe, to the world's end, but to know, what he had commanded them, Matt. xxviii. 19—21; and as if the Word of God were only a light and lantern unto men's eyes, that they might see the ways of God, and not to their feet, and paths, that they might walk in them. Psa. cxix. 105. The same prophet in the same Psalm entreats the Lord to teach him the way of his statutes, that he might keep it unto the end: and that he would give him understanding, that he might keep his law, Psa. cxix. 33, 34; professing also in the same place, that he was comforted in God against all that confusion, which his enemies would have brought upon him, that he had respect to all God's commandments, ver. 6; and this respect was not of bare knowledge, but of observation, and obedience, as appears in all the five verses before-

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going. Neither therefore can the ministers excuse themselves from making some parts of the Holy Scriptures of small moment, and needless, as Mr. Barrowe chargeth them, because they advise the people to desire the knowledge of them, except with their knowledge they joined obedience; neither ought the people to rest in that unsound advice, considering that, to him that knoweth how to do well, and doth it not, to him it is sin, James iv. 17; and that to him that knoweth his master's will, and doth it not, many stripes are due. Luke xii. 47.

3. This pleading by the ministers, that they hold, and enjoy every fundamental truth, and whatsoever is of necessity to salvation, considering the end of it, which is, the stopping of the people from pressing unto further obedience, and profession of the will of God, and ordinances of Christ, is injurious both to the growth, and sincerity of the obedience of God's people. For, whereas, they ought to be led forward unto perfection, Heb. vi. 1; this teacheth them to stay in the foundation, as if it were sufficient for the building of the house, that the foundation were laid: and secondly, it insinuates, that it is sufficient, if men so serve God, as they can obtain salvation, though with disobedience of a great part of the revealed will of God: occasioning them thereby to serve him only, or chiefly for wages as hypocrites do. As if a child should be taught so far to honour, and please his father as he might get his inheritance, but not much to trouble himself about giving or doing him any further honour, or service.

Secondly, I do answer that this truth, which the ministers make the only fundamental truth in religion, is held and professed by as vile heretics as ever were since Christ came in the flesh. May not a company of excommunicates hold, teach, and defend this truth, and yet are they not a true church of God.

3. I deny that the whole Church of England hath received, and doth hold, and profess this fundamental truth; how boldly soever these ministers affirm it, page 166. They grant there are many atheists in the land, they might say in the church, for atheists are, and ever will be of the king's and state's religion, and many ignorant and wicked men besides, who make not so clear and

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holy a profession of the true faith as they should. And do these atheists hold, and profess the true faith, and every article of God's holy truth, which is fundamental? Are there not many thousands in the national church ignorant of the very first rudiments, and foundations of religion, as the apostle noteth them down, Heb. vi. 1, 2: and can they hold, and profess that whereof they are ignorant? Yea, how can any wicked men hold, that Christ is their Saviour, but they hold an apparent lie in the eyes of all men? for which, notwithstanding, these ministers will have them reputed true members of Christ's body. I add, that since the body of that church or nation, consists of mere natural men, and that natural men are papists, in the case of justification, and look to be saved by their good meaning, and well doings, it is most untruly affirmed by those ministers, that their church accounts none her members, but such as profess salvation by Christ only. They hold otherwise and so profess, if an account of their faith be demanded, as I have showed by the testimony of Mr. Nichols,* and could do by the testimony of others, if all men did not see it too evidently. And yet see what these men affirm and that confidently, and without fear, for their advantage: as that their whole church makes profession of the true faith; that it holds, and maintains every article fundamental of God's holy truth: and particularly that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, &c.,; and lastly, that they receive this truth, are the people of God, and in the state of salvation. Whereupon it must follow, that their whole national church is in the state of salvation. And surely so had it need be, in the judgment of men, having the promises and seals of the covenant of salvation applied, and ministered unto it, and to every member of it.

Lastly, Though the whole Church of England, and every member in it, did personally profess the true faith in holiness, as all the true members of the church do, which are therefore called both saints and faithful, Eph. i. 1, and that we had no just exception against that profane and implicit profession for which both Mr. B. and the ministers plead,

* *Vide* page 288, *supra*.

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yet could not this make it or them a true church. The bare profession of faith makes not a true church, except the persons so professing be united in the covenant and fellowship of the gospel into particular congregations, having the entire power of Christ within themselves. As hewed stones are fit for an house, but not an house, nor any part of it, till they be orderly laid, and couched together: so are men professing faith and holiness fit for the church, but not a church, nor of it, before their orderly combination into a particular assembly having in it the power of Christ for the ministry, government, censures, and other ordinances. A company of excommunicates put out of the church's order, may profess the same faith they did formerly; so may a sect of schismatics putting themselves causelessly out of the church's order: so may many particular persons, never joining themselves into any church at all. You yourselves define a church to be a company of faithful people, &c., so is not your national church, but many companies: not distinct and entire in themselves, and so only one in nature, as all the true churches of God are: but one by monstrous composition, in a preposterous and absurd imitation of the Jewish national church and government.

Thus much of the arguments; in the handling of which the ministers insinuate, pages 167, 168, against Mr. Barrowe sundry unjust accusations, which I will briefly clear. As first, that he will account none members of the visible church such as are truly faithful, not only in outward profession and appearance, but even in the Lord's eye and judgment: because a church is described a company of faithful people, that truly worship God and readily obey him.

But, wherefore should the ministers thus interpret him; doth he not speak of the visible or external church, and so, by consequence, of visible and external faith and obedience, which are seen of men. In their articles of religion a church is made a company of faithful people: and if they must not be truly faithful, then they must be falsely faithful. And for true worship and ready obedience, 1 John iv. 23; Rom. xv. 18; xvi. 19, the Lord requires them in his Word, according to which we must define churches, and

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not according to casual corruptions and aberrations brought in by man's fault.

2. They charge, pages 170, 171, Mr. Barrowe to hold that every member of our assemblies is led by the Spirit into all truth, and that it is evident he would have none to be accounted the people and church of God, who either know not, or profess not every truth contained in the Scriptures: because he affirms in his "Discovery," that "to the people of God, and every one of them, God hath given his holy sanctifying Spirit, to open unto them and to lead them into all truth."

It follows not that because he affirms they have received the Spirit to lead them into all truth, that he therefore affirms, they are led into all truth by the Spirit. May not the Papists as truly avouch, that Paul teacheth that the church is without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, because he teacheth that Christ hath given himself for it, that he might make it unto himself a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing? Eph. v. 25, 27. It is then an ill collection, that because one thing is done, that another might follow upon it, that therefore the latter which is to follow, is also done. And for the point: as it is the work of the Spirit to lead men into all truth, and as all that are Christ's, Rom. viii. 9, or members of his body, have his Spirit, so doth it follow that all the members of the church have the Spirit given them of God, to lead them into all truth, though it have not his full work, by reason of the contrary work of the flesh in this life, where all men know but in part. Gal. v. 17; 1 Cor. xii. 12.

3. That Mr. Barrowe holds every truth in the Scriptures fundamental, that is, as they expound it, page 174, such as if it be not known, and obeyed, the whole religion and faith of the church must needs fall to the ground.

Mr. Ainsworth hath set down his words: from which no such collection can be made: he directs them, and that worthily, against these deceivers which knowing and acknowledging, that they want many special ordinances of Christ, and are burdened instead of them, with the inventions of Antichrist, do notwithstanding encourage themselves, and others, by these distinctions that they have the fundamental truths of the gospel, and whatsoever is

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necessary to salvation, and the like, in a purpose to go on all their life long in disobedience. For which men how much better were it to consider, how it is written that, "Whosoever shall break one of the least commandments and teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven," Matt. v. 19; than thus to turn upon them which reprove them for their unfaithfulness; and misinterpreting their sayings most injuriously, to spend thus many words, as these ministers do, in confuting their own corrupt glosses.

All Foreign Churches acknowledge the English Church.

Their fourth, and last argument, is, for that "all the known churches in the world acknowledge their church for their sister: and give her the right hand of fellowship."

This argument hath been sundry times urged by Mr. Bernard, and so answered sundry times both by Mr. Ainsworth, and myself in the former part of my book,* whither I must refer the reader, contenting myself with a brief observation of such untruths, and errors, as these ministers are driven unto in the prosecuting of this argument: in pages 178—181, as—

First, that, "all the known churches in the world are well acquainted with their doctrine, and liturgy:" to which they should also add their book of ordination, and canons ecclesiastical, for their ministry, and government: than which nothing is more untrue. Beza, who was specially interested in these matters, will hardly be persuaded of the true state of things: touching dispensations, pluralities, the power of excommunication in one man, and the like.

2. It is most untrue, that "God hath sanctified the testimony of churches for a principal help in the deciding of controversies in this kind." It is, though some help, yet less principal, yea, the least of many.

3. That "Paul feared that without the approbation of James, and Cephas, and John he should have run in vain."

Paul feared no such thing; for he was both assured of his calling from the Lord, and had also taken, long before that time, good experience of the Lord's blessing upon his ministry both amongst the Jews, and Gentiles; and

* *Vide* pages 42—44, 49, 50, *supra*.

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knew right assuredly, that his preaching was not in vain. His care was to take away from the weak all scruple of mind, or jealousy of contention amongst the apostles; he went up to Jerusalem to confer with them.

4. That "Paul sought to win commendation and credit to the orders which he by his apostolical authority might have established, by the judgment of other churches." Whereas the apostle Paul did by his apostolical authority appoint those orders in all those churches he speaks of, as the scriptures quoted testify, 1 Cor. iv. 7, 17; xvi. 1. Besides, the Church of England can win no great credit to her orders by the orders of other churches, considering how contrary she is in them to all other churches departed from Rome, whom alone in very many she resembleth.

5. "The testimony which John Baptist gave of Christ," John i. 6, 7, 15—23, is unfitly brought for the testimony of one church of another. For it was the proper, and principal work of John's calling to give witness of Christ: wherein also he could not err. It is not so with, or between any churches in the world.

6. Where it is further affirmed, that "there are cases wherein one church is commanded to seek the judgment of other churches, and to account it as the judgment of God;" for which Acts xv. 2, is alleged: as it is true, that one church is, in cases, to seek the judgment, and help of another, so is it untrue, that the judgment of that other church, or of all the churches in the world, is to be accounted as the judgment of God. Indeed the decrees of the apostles at Jerusalem, being by immediate, infallible direction of the Holy Ghost, ver. 28, were to be accounted as the judgment of God: but for any ordinary, either churches or persons, to challenge the like unto their determinations were pope-like presumption.

7. To the ministers' demand in the next place, "Saith Christ to any particular congregation of the faithful in our land, Whatsoever they bind in earth, is bound in heaven, Matt. xviii. 18, and saith he it not also to the churches of other nations?"

I do answer that, if Christ have so said to the particular congregations, who hath said it to the prelates and their substitutes, or to any officer, or officers, excluding the body

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of the congregation? Even none but he, whose work it is to gainsay Christ, and to subvert his order. Secondly, If any of your parishes be such congregations, why do not you as faithful ministers exhort them to, and guide them in the use of this power of binding and loosing, which Christ hath given them? Or are not you content to suffer them to go on, and yourselves to go before them in the loss of this liberty, yea, in a most vile subjection to their and your spiritual lords, which have usurped it? And for the argument it is of no force: for neither hath any one church in the world that power over another, nor all the churches in the world over any one, which the meanest church hath over any her member, or members whomsoever. One church may forsake another, but judiciously to censure, or excommunicate it, may it not. The same answer, for substance, may serve for that which is objected from 1 Cor. xiv. 32. Besides, no church can so fully discern of the estate of another church, as it can of the proper members appertaining unto it. Yea I add, that in this respect we are better able to judge of the Church of England than are any foreign churches, notwithstanding our weakness, because they do not in any measure know the estate of it, as we do.

Lastly, As that saying of the ministers must have a very favourable interpretation, viz., "that the church hath power to judge of a man infallibly, that he is in the estate of salvation," so is their other affirmation, that "the discerning of the spirits, and doctrine of such teachers, as arise in the church, is such a gift, as the true church never wanted," page 181, as popish an error, as ever was broached in Rome. For who then can the church err? or how can it be deceived by false teachers? or how could Rome come to that estate of apostacy wherein she now standeth? Or may not a Papist plead thus with these men? Rome was a true church of God. Now the true church never wants the gift of discerning spirits and doctrines, therefore Rome neither hath wanted, nor doth, nor ever shall want this gift: and so by consequence cannot be fallen from the truth, as is pretended against her.

To conclude, it is not truly said of these men, that this judging of one church by another is a matter of salvation. The church of Jerusalem was ignorant of the calling of the

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churches of the Gentiles, as the Scriptures testify. Acts x. 14, 15, 34, 35; xi. 2—5. And I would know what the Church of England judgeth of the Lutheran churches, as they are called. It accounteth of them, as of true churches. So do not they of their churches, whom they call Calvinists, but, on the contrary, repute them as heretical. Whereupon it followeth, that either a true church may err in judging of another church, or else that either the Church of England, or the Lutheran churches, or both, are not true churches. Howsoever therefore we do not make light account of the testimony, and judgment of other churches, as these ministers accuse us, yet dare we not make idols of them as they seem to do, who wanting both the Word of God, and practice of other churches for their warrant, seek commendation by the testimony which some have given of them in respect of certain general heads of doctrine, in which we ourselves also do for the most part concur with them.

The Ministers' Replies to Objections of Separatists.

Thus much of the ministers' arguments. Now follow their answers to two main objections made by us against the whole body of their church, and their parish assemblies.

I. *That the Church of England was not gathered in a Scriptural Manner.*

The first is, that it was not gathered by such means, as God in his Word hath ordained, and sanctified for the gathering of his church. The second, that they communicate together in a false and idolatrous outward worship of God, which is polluted with the writings of men, viz., with read stinted prayers, homilies, catechisms, and such like.

These objections have been elsewhere prosecuted, and the exceptions taken by the ministers against them, particularly answered by Mr. Ainsworth; and, therein their both corrupt, and weak dealing manifested. I will briefly add a few things.

Against the former objection they take five exceptions.

First, "That they might lawfully be accounted a true church, though it could not appear that they were at the first rightly gathered: as the disciples might be assured

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of Christ's bodily presence amongst them, when they saw, and felt him, John xx. 19, 28, though they could not have discerned which way, or how he could possibly have come in. Pages 182, 183.

Belike then, we must believe that the Church of England was gathered miraculously, as Christ came by miracle into the place where his disciples were assembled. But the answer is, that these men take the main question for granted, which is that their national church is, for the present, a true, orderly gathered church of Christ; and that, so sensibly, as it may be seen and felt.

Secondly, That they "might be rightly gathered to the fellowship of the visible church, by other means than by the preaching of the gospel," that is, as they expound it, by "public, and ministerial preaching; for which they allege our opinion though unsound, yet having force enough to stop our mouths."

And do these men deal soundly, who to prove a point in controversy, bring the opinion of their adversaries, which they condemn, as unsound? The opinion is most sound, that men out of office, for so we speak, may convert men to God, and that ordinarily; otherwise they may not prophesy ordinarily; nay, to what end should they ordinarily instruct, reprove, and exhort privately such as are out of the way? And where further they make it one thing for men to be soundly converted, and another thing for them to be lawfully made a visible church, they use craft to cover error. They use craft in speaking of sound conversion, to conceal that profane and hateful error, that a visible church may be lawfully gathered of unconverted persons. For as our question is about the external, or visible church, so do we require for it only external, and visible conversion, or that which is seen and discerned of men, leaving unto God the judging and discerning of that which is sound or inward: according to the difference which themselves truly put from the scriptures, 1 Sam. xvi. 7; Acts xv. 7, 8, in another place.*

Now that it is a vile, and profane error to hold that men unconverted, and wicked, viz: so far as men can judge by outward appearance, may lawfully be admitted into the visible church, I have showed at large in the former part

* *Vide* pages 176, 177, *supra*.

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of the book,* and could, if need were, show the whole course of the Scriptures against it. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Acts ii. 40, 41, 46, 47; iv. 32; viii. 5, 6, 8, 37; ix. 15; with xiii. 42, 43; xiv. 15; xvi. 14, 15, 31—33.

Of like nature with the former, is that which followeth, namely, that "men may by other means be lawfully made a visible church, than by the preaching," that is by the opening, or publishing, of the gospel. For which they instance in those which followed Christ, and professed themselves his disciples, who yet were not all drawn by his Word, but some by miracles, John ii. 23, 25, some, by the report they heard of him, John iv. 39, some, by the desire they had to be fed by him, John vi. 24, 26: and that Christian kings have, by their laws, been means to bring men to the outward society of the church, unto which men may be compelled. Luke xiv. 23.

It is not true that Christ, in his life, gathered any visible churches. These persons indeed, which followed Christ, were members of the visible church, but it was of the church of the Jews, which Christ gathered not. He lived and died the minister of circumcision, Rom. xv. 8, and gathered no distinct churches at all from the Jewish church. Secondly, neither any of the things named, nor all of them together, without or besides the gospel, are means sufficient lawfully to gather a visible church. Some of them, as miracles, may be means to confirm the gospel, Mark xvi. 20, and the rest of them to draw men to the hearing of, and outward submission unto it: but it alone is the hand of God, as Mr. Bernard truly writeth, stretched out to subdue people unto him: it is the seed of the Lord's husbandry: the Word of his kingdom. 1 Cor. iii. 9; Matt. xiii. 19.

When the Lord Jesus sent out his apostles to gather churches, the only means which came into his heart was the teaching, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20, or making of men disciples: and the apostle to the Ephesians, ch. ii. 20, witnesseth, that the church, or temple of God, is built upon the foundation of the apostles, and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone: but these men, it seems, will have the church of God built upon the laws of magistrates, yea, upon the reports, yea, upon the bellies of

* *Vide* pages 282—288, 318—327, *supra*.

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men. They would be counted ministers of the gospel, and yet they make no conscience of ascribing the honour which is peculiar unto the gospel, unto so many other, and so mean things. And for Christian kings and queens, as I acknowledge them for nursing fathers and mothers, so may I not for procreant parents of the church. It is unreasonable to affirm, that civil causes, as are their compulsive laws, should bring forth spiritual effects, as is the church or kingdom of Christ. By this argument the Turk may make all his dominions a church in a week or two. It may as truly be affirmed, that magistrates may by their laws compel men to receive the Word gladly: to stand in the estate of salvation: to be saints, and sanctified in Jesus Christ: to be in him, and in God the Father, through him, Acts ii. 41, 47; 1 Cor. i. 2; 1 Thess. i. 1; 2 Thess. i. 1; viz.: externally, and in appearance, and so far as men can judge: for such is the church, and of such persons doth it consist, as the scriptures cited testify. And for the parable in Luke xiv. 23, which they bring to prove that the church may be gathered by bodily compulsion, as Mr. Ainsworth hath justly reproved their folly from Prov. xxvi. 9, and sufficiently confuted their erroneous exposition, showing that Luke speaketh of a spiritual violence and compulsion, which the Word of God offereth unto the consciences of men; so do I add for the conclusion of this point, that even the blind Pharisees did see, and discern, that Christ meant by the former servants, the prophets, which the Lord the king sent to the Jews; as he did by the last, the apostles, whom, when the Jews refused the gospel, he sent to the Gentiles, to compel them by the efficacy of the Word, which is mighty in operation, to the obedience of faith. Matt. xxii. 15; Heb. iv. 12.

Lastly, What compulsive laws soever the magistrates may make, or execute, it is a vile error to think, and a sinful flattery to bear them in hand, that they have power from God to compel an apparently flagitious person to enter into the church of God, and the church so to receive and continue him.*

The ministers' third exception is, that "their church was gathered by the preaching of the Word: and that the first

* *Vide* pages 315, 316, *supra.*

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conversion of their land to the faith of Christ was by the preaching of the gospel, as appears by the best histories. And so they go on and tell us of many from age to age, called by the same means: who in the time of persecution sealed the truth with their blood, and in the time of freedom did openly profess the same." Page 184.

In the page immediately before-going, a church might be gathered without conversion: and now their church was lawfully gathered, for it was converted to the faith of Christ, by the preaching of the gospel. Secondly, It is both untruly and unadvisedly affirmed of these ministers, that their land was converted to the faith of Christ. The defence of their national church, and of the compulsion of all the flagitious persons in the nation to join, and continue members of it, drives them to this absurd assertion, that the whole nation, or land was at the first converted to the faith of Christ.

And where they speak of many, in all ages since, called by the gospel which also they have sealed with their blood, as I confess this with Mr. Ainsworth, and rejoice for the mercy of God towards them this way, so I doubt not but the truths taught in Rome have been effectual to the saving of many; for which also, there have many of them, and no doubt, would many more, if there were occasion, lay down their lives against pagans and infidels.

But these men should prove first, that the body of the land have been converted to the faith of Christ, and orderly joined into particular congregations: and second, that it hath so continued ever since, even in the times when the blood of those martyrs now spoken of, was shed by the laws civil and ecclesiastical, made by the body of it, through the seduction of Antichrist, for that purpose: and so that there needed no new gathering after the Romish apostacy, by the preaching of the gospel on the one side, and by willing subjection in free, and personal profession, on the other.

That which they add, of sundry secret congregations in Queen Mary's days in many parts of the land, is but a boast; there were very few of them in any. But, where they say, that these did upon Queen Elizabeth's entrance openly profess the gospel, it is untrue; there was not one congre-

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gation separated in Queen Mary's days, that so remained in Queen Elizabeth's. The congregations were dissolved, and the persons in them bestowed themselves in their several parishes, where their livings and estates lay. The circumcised were mingled with the uncircumcised, whence came that monstrous confusion, against which we witness. And show me one of your ministers continuing his charge in Queen Elizabeth's days, over the flock to which he ministered in Queen Mary's days, the persecuted gospel. It is certain the congregations, whether many, or few, were all dispersed, and that, the members of them joined themselves to the profane apostate Papists, where their outward occasions lay. As then an handful, or bundle of corn shuffled into a field of weeds, though in itself it retain the same nature, yet cannot make the field a corn-field: so neither could this small handful of separated people in Queen Mary's days sanctify the whole field of idolatrous, and profane multitude in the land, by their seating themselves amongst them.

As then it is not true, that the body of the land, in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign, did join unto the secret congregations, so remaining, in Queen Mary's days: but on the contrary, these congregations did dissolve, and join themselves with the unhallowed rout in the popish and profane parishes under their late mass, and their dumb priests for the most part: so neither matters it, which joined unto which, since the unhallowed, and graceless multitude, neither could by the Word of God join unto others, nor be joined to by them in the covenant of grace and of the gospel, with the seals and other the ordinances thereof, to which they had, or have no right. Upon the same ground also I infer, that it is not material, though the people were not compelled to the profession of the gospel before the midsummer after the queen came to the crown; if they were compelled to profess the gospel, of, and unto which, they were apparently, and notoriously ignorant, and disobedient, as they were. They knew what they were to look for: and so being, for the most part, of no religion, they set themselves to conform, as the times were, to that, which they discerned the queen to be of.

And for the preachers, and commissioners, which were

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sent before this set day, for the Catholic faith of all the queen's subjects, as I think it was well, so was it not sufficient to make the whole land, or to prepare them to be a true church: besides that the people were of the church all this while: the same national, provincial, diocesan, and parochial church, and churches consisting of the same persons generally, still continuing under the same government, and ministry, and in the same will-worship, though in a measure reformed, as before in Queen Mary's days.

Now for the preachers you name, as Mr. Knox, Lever, &c., which exercised their ministry in some of the best reformed churches, during Queen Mary's reign, as the good they did to some few, in comparison, by the truths they taught, could not make all the queen's subjects a true national church, so do we all know, how hardly they were suffered in the beginning of the queen's reign, and that contrary to the public church government, and ministry: as also that neither they, nor any others, could or can be admitted to any church by any ministry received in the reformed churches, but only by the ordination of a popish prelate whether English, or Romish, it matters not: by which also it is apparent to all men upon what string the English ministry hangeth.

Lastly, Where these men say that many are daily added to the church by the ministry of the Word preached, I marvel how this can be, and from whence they are added. Addition is a motion, and in every motion, there must be the terms, or bounds, from and to which it is made. All they to whom they preach, are of the church already: for recusant Papists come not to their church; and besides the number of them increaseth daily. It seems, then, they are added from the church to the same church. Because this practice of adding men to the church by the preaching of the gospel was in use in the primitive churches, and this phrase used in the Scriptures; therefore, these ministers think they may abuse the phrase, without the thing: and so feed their simple readers with words of the wind.

Of the ministers' fourth exception, page 188, viz.: "of the uniting of the queen's subjects unto those professors, whose fellowship in Popery they had forsaken," and of

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the course taken for that purpose by the example of the godly kings of Judah, I have formerly spoken: of the former part even now: and of the latter elsewhere, declaring, first that the English nation, and all the people of the kingdom never were admitted into the Lord's covenant, by the rules of the New Testament, to become a national church, under national government, as was Judah, and all the people in it under the Old. If this can be proved I acknowledge myself in many great errors: if not, it is vanity and error, thus to instance in Judah, and indeed to revive Judaism, and the Old Testament.

2. That though England had been sometimes a true national church, as was Judah, yet that it did not so remain in the deep apostacy of Antichrist but was divorced in Rome, her mother: whereas Judah on the other side, into what transgression soever she fell, was never divorced by the Lord, but still remained his, though unfaithful, wife: the Lord ever and anon, stirring up some extraordinary instrument or other, for her reformation, and the renovation of her covenant: with which also the Lord so effectually wrought, as the things are wonderful which are written of all the people, and such, as never shall be found in any whole kingdom to the world's end.

3. That the reformation by King Edward, and Queen Elizabeth, though great in itself, and they, in it, under God, greatly to be honoured, was nothing comparable to that which was made in Judah, by Jehoshaphat, Josiah, Asa, Hezekiah, and Nehemiah.

These points I have proved at large elsewhere* and do refer the reader thither for answer, only I will note some particular oversights of the ministers in this fourth exception: as first, where they say they have proved there was a true church in the land before Queen Elizabeth's reign; they should have proved, that the land was a true church: for so was Judah. Second, where they say, that the noblemen were sent by Jehoshaphat only to accompany, and assist the Levites, and to countenance their ministry, where the Scriptures affirm they were sent even to teach. 2 Chron. xvii. 7. You will have no teaching but by church officers: therefore you so put the Scripture off. Third, that they say, Josiah compelled his subjects to the service of the true

* *Vide* pages 309—320, *supra*.

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God: taking compulsion as they do; where it is evident the people did it freely: though I acknowledge he made compulsive laws.* Fourth, speaking of the authority of magistrates over their subjects they bring in Hezekiah's proclamation, as they call it, sent to Israel: whereas the ten tribes were not his subjects, nor he their king. And lastly, that the Ishmaelites were separated from the church of God: therein acknowledging that Judah was always the true church of God: which I suppose they will not say of England always, or of Rome: if they do, it is their sin to separate from the true church.

The fifth, and last exception of the ministers is, "that Mr. Barrowe and Mr. Greenwood required that the people in the beginning of the queen's reign should by solemn oath and covenant have renounced idolatry, and have professed faith, and obedience to the gospel, after the example of Asa's reformation." To which their answer is, first, that "such a covenanting by oath is not absolutely necessary, as appears in Jehoshaphat's, and Josiah's reformation. Second, that the people was before that oath and covenant, God's true church: which their people also may be. Third, that sundry congregations as in Coventry, and Northampton did publicly profess repentance for their idolatry, and promised to obey the truth established. Fourth, they doubt not to affirm that the whole land in the first parliament did enter a solemn covenant with the Lord for renouncing of Popery, and receiving the gospel." Page 189.

That Mr. Barrowe and Mr. Greenwood should require, that the covenant into which the church entereth, should be by oath, necessarily, is more than I know: or than we practise. But that they required, that the people, that is the whole nation, should so have passed a solemn oath, and covenant, I know is most untrue. All men know, they thought the ignorant, profane, popish multitude incapable of the Lord's covenant, and the seals of it: and to have required of them an oath for such a purpose had been to have required of them the taking of God's name in vain. Where it is said in the second place that the people of Judah were God's true church, before the time of that oath and covenant, it is true, and against you. And I would de-

* *Vide* pages 289—320, *supra*.

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mand of you whether your people were God's true church, when Popery reigned. Your answer is, so may our people be. You dare not say they were; for then you should acknowledge the Romish synagogue the true church of God, and that you had sinfully schismed from it, as Mr. Bernard proves against you and himself: you will not say, they were not: for that would make against you in the point in hand: and would manifest, as indeed it doth, that the course taken with Judah, being the true church, for her reformation, cannot agree with Rome, or England, as a member of the Romish church for her reformation.

To that which is added, in the 3rd place, of Coventry, Northampton, and some other congregations, my reply is, first, that this is not likely to have been the deed of the congregations, but of some two or three forward ministers, a few of the people it may be approving of it, which their successors were as like to reverse. Second, they did not repent of their public idolatry, nor purpose to obey the truth in sincerity: of their profane mixture, Romish hierarchy, and ministry, popish liturgy, and constitutions, according to which all things are administered amongst them, they repented not: and besides they knew right well many truths, which they purposed not to embrace. Third, grant it were, as they pretend, with these few parishes, what must be said of the rest which did not so practise? with whom they make, and always have done, one entire national church, or what is this to the public, and formal state of the Church of England against which we deal? The truth is, these men thus practising, were reputed, and truly, schismatics in the formal constitution of the church: and by which this their dealing hath no warrant at all. If we should object unto you the popish doctrines and practices, of two or three ministers amongst you, not warrantable by law, you would not admit of our exception against the formal, established estate of your church: so neither may we admit of yours, for the practice of two or three, disliking the present state of things, and seeking for reformation of them.

Lastly, We see indeed that those ministers doubt not to affirm, "that the whole land, Papists, and Atheists and all, did in the first parliament of the queen enter a solemn

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covenant for renouncing of Popery, and receiving the gospel: but we would see first, how all these swarms of wicked Atheists, and most flagitious persons were by the revealed will of God capable of the covenant of the new testament, and the seals, and other rites, and privileges of it. Otherwise this haling them into covenant with the Lord, against his express will, was a profane and presumptuous enterprise in itself, though I doubt not arising from a godly intent in the queen, and her chief councillors being misled by them, whom they too much trusted. Second, we would see what warrant there is in the New Testament for this national covenant, or that all the people in a land, since the land of Canaan was profaned, should unite into a national church, under a national government, and ministry. Third, that which we answered in the second place to the former branch of this exception, must here again be remembered. Fourth, this undoubted affirmation of the ministers touching the whole land's covenanting in the parliament, first, inferreth that the enacting of civil laws, and penal statutes by kings, and states, doth gather churches: for none other covenant was there in the parliament:* secondly, it confirmeth the popish doctrine of implicit faith: and that men may receive, and profess a faith whereof they are ignorant, yea, which they dislike and hate, so far as they know it: for so was it with the body of your nation, the greatest part by far being mere natural men, and so not knowing the gospel: yea "evil doers, which hate the light." 1 Cor. ii. 14; John iii. 20.

II.—*That the Forms of Worship in the Church of England are not Scriptural or Serviceable.*

Our second objection touching the outward worship wherein the Church of England communicateth, comes now to be enforced. In the clearing of which the ministers do, to speak on, insist only upon their "stinted and set forms of prayer:" for the justification of which they bring sundry scriptures, as Numb. vi. 23, 24; Deut. xxvi. 3, 15; Psa. xxii. 1; Luke xi. 2. Now for our more orderly proceeding, I will reduce the things they say to three general heads,

* *Vide* pages 318—320, *supra*.

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under which I will consider of the particulars, showing how in all, and every of them they are mistaken.

First, In that they do confound, and make all one ordinance, blessings, psalms, and prayers.

Second, In misinterpreting the scriptures they bring to prove a set and stinted form of words to be imposed in prayer.

Third, In concluding, as they do, that if Moses, and Christ might appoint, and impose a certain form of words to be used for prayer, that then the bishops in England or others, may use the same power, and appoint another form of words so to be used. Of these three in order:

And first, it is evident, that, howsoever some kind of blessing and prayer be all one, and so may be confounded, yet that solemn kind of blessing spoken of, Numb. vi., and which the patriarchs, and priests did use in their places, was clean of another nature. In prayer the minister stands in place of the people, and in their name offers up petitions, and thanksgiving to God: but in blessing, the minister stands in the place of God, and in his name pronounceth a blessing, or mercy upon the people. Second, whereas this duty of prayer may be performed by one equal to another, by an inferior to a superior, yea, by a man to himself; that other, of blessing, is always from the greater to the lesser: and therefore the apostle to the Hebrews, to show that the priesthood of Melchisedec was more excellent than that of Levi proves it by this, that Melchisedec blessed Abraham; taking this for granted without all contradiction, that the less is blessed of the greater. Heb. vii. 17. Third, Mr. Bernard himself in this book, page 148, makes prayer one thing, and the blessing pronounced upon the people, when they departed, another thing: as he also makes singing of psalms a third distinct thing from them both: as there is cause he should.

For first, the apostle writing to the Corinthians of the divers gifts, and administrations in the church, speaketh thus, "I will pray with the spirit, but I will pray with the understanding also:" I will sing with the spirit, but I will sing with the understanding also." 1 Cor. xiv. 15. Answerable unto which is that, in James, ch. v. 13: "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray; is any merry? let him sing:"

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both the one and other apostle making singing and praying distinct exercises. Add unto this, that whereas in praying we are to speak only unto God, it is otherwise in singing, where we are taught to speak unto ourselves in psalms, and to teach, and admonish ourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, Eph. v. 19; Col. iii. 16. What greater difference? In prayers we speak only to God: in psalms to ourselves mutually, or one to another. Neither had Mr. Giffard any advantage in the words following, where we are taught to sing with a grace in our hearts to the Lord: for by singing with a grace is meant such singing as ministereth grace unto the hearers, contrary to that corrupt, or rotten communication, Eph. iv. 29. And in this, as in all other things, we must propound the glory and honour of God unto ourselves.

3. There are very many both of David's, and other psalms, wherein there is no title of prayer: but they are merely to be sung for doctrine, instruction, and meditation, as Psa. i. 2; and many more. The ministers write, pp. 192, 193, that the most psalms that David made, were sung not only as meditations, and doctrines, for the instructions of the church, but as prayers to God, because they are said to be sung unto the Lord: for which purpose they instance in one only, which is Psa. lxvi. 2, 3.

Well, not to fall to reckoning with them, wherein they and I should not agree: for I would except against their picked instance, Psa. lxvi. 2, 3, which all men may see was not sung for prayer, nor unto the Lord, as they mean, but for instruction, and provocation of the church to praise God, if they consider it, they should have proved, not that some, but that all psalms are prayers; otherwise they may not be confounded, and made one ordinance, as by them they are. But to come to that which is, specially, to be observed: even those psalms, whose matter is prayer, are not prayers; neither is the singing of them, the outward ordinance, and exercise of praying. And this is the very state of the controversy. Which that it may be understood the better, it must be considered, that the very same matter of prayer may be used diversely, and so formed into divers external ordinances. It may be read, preached, heard, written, sung, or prayed. Now who is so simple,

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as to say hereupon that reading, preaching, hearing, writing, singing, praying, are all one? If a man read David's prayer, that the Lord would turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness, 2 Sam. xv. 31; or either read, or sing the Psalm vi. 6, where in his prayer, he professeth, that he causeth his bed every night to swim, and waters his couch with tears: or Psalm xlii. 6, that he remembers God from the land of Jordan, &c., doth that man therefore pray to God, that he would turn into foolishness the counsel of Ahithophel? or doth he profess, that he waters his couch with tears every night, and remembers God from the land of Jordan? or is it not evident he reads, and sings those prayers only for instruction of himself, and others? And so we read in the inscription of the last named psalm that it was committed to the sons of Korah, not to pray it, which they could not do without folly, but for instruction. And as truly may it be said, that the reading of Noah's curse, Gen. ix. 25, or Shimei's, 2 Sam. xvi. 5, is cursing, as that the reading, or singing, for singing is but a reading in tune, of David's prayers, is praying.

But it will here be asked, Is it not then lawful for a man in the singing of David's psalms, consisting of prayer, to lift up his heart, and to have it affected accordingly, as he can apply the matter in them to his present state, and occasions? Yes certainly, it is both lawful, and godly: but withal it must be remembered, that the question here is not about the inward affection of the heart, but about the outward ordinance: and second, that a man may so lift up his heart, and have the affection of prayer, and thanksgiving, in preaching, hearing, writing, reading: and yet not perform the outward exercise, and outward ordinance of prayer, of which our question is.

Lastly, In psalms there is of necessity required a certain known form of words, that two or more may sing together: according to the nature of the ordinance, wherein many joining vocally, do make a consent or harmony. But who will say there is such simple necessity of a set form of words for prayer? wherein one is to utter a voice, according to the suggestions of the Spirit in his heart, and the rest to consent by silence, with saying, Amen. By

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which it appeareth how unadvisedly these ministers and others do thus again and again urge set forms of psalms to prove set forms of prayer.

Thus much of the first head; the second followeth, in which such scriptures are to be considered of, as are brought to prove a set and stinted form of words to be imposed for prayer. The principal scriptures for this purpose, and unto which the rest may be reduced, are Numb. vi. 23, 24; Matt. vi. 9; Luke xi. 2.

It is a troublesome thing that these ministers thus urge the letter of the scriptures: as if the question were not about their sense, and interpretation: which they should prove to be for their stinted service: as they should also disprove our reasons to the contrary. But herein they are utterly silent, and think it sufficient to inculcate the words, "Thus shall ye bless the children of Israel, and say unto them," &c.: and, "When you pray, say thus, Our father," &c., even as the Papists urge these words, "This is my body." Numb. vi. 23; Matt. vi. 9; Luke xi. 2.

First, then, we do acknowledge these words to be in the scriptures by them cited. Second, we hold it lawful to use those very words in our prayers, all, or any part of them, if we be thereunto guided by the Holy Ghost in whom we must always pray, and by whose help we must make our requests unto God, Jude 20; Rom. viii. 26, 27. But the question is, whether Moses tied and stinted the priests to that form of words in blessing the people: and whether Christ tied and stinted his disciples to that very form of words for prayer, so to be used by the one, and other, without alteration, addition, or diminution.

And that this is not the meaning of the Holy Ghost, I do manifest by these reasons.

First, These particles "thus, or on this manner," and "say," do not usually in the Scriptures design or note out the form of words, but the substance of the thing spoken of. Take an instance or two. When the Lord sent Moses unto Pharaoh, King of Egypt, it was under these terms: "Thou shalt say to Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, my first-born: wherefore I say to thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me." Exod iv. 22, 23, &c. But when Moses came to deliver his message in the next

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chapter, ver. 1, 2, he doth not tie himself to the self-same words, nor useth them. He did not understand, Thou shalt say to Pharaoh, and Thus saith the Lord, of the form of words, but of the substance of the thing. The same in effect may be said of Abraham's servant going about a wife for Isaac, who, relating to Laban the prayer he made for direction in the business, doth not use the same words, when he tells him what he said in his prayer. Gen. xxiv. 12, 42. It seems in his understanding, a man might say thus, and thus, in prayer, though he used not the same words if he spake to the same purpose.

Many more scriptures might I bring, as others have done before me, to prove, that these words, and particles, upon which these men would reckon the words of their prayers, do no way enjoin any such stint of words and syllables, but only a similitude of matter, and are for direction therein.

It is evident in the Scriptures, that neither Moses, nor the priests, or other holy men stinted themselves to these words. 1 Sam. i. 17; ii. 20; Deut. xxxiii. 1, 2; 2 Chron. vi. 3, 4.

Thirdly, Why do not the ministers now tie themselves to this form of words in blessing the people: they being the Lord's priests, and Levites, and the church, the Israel of God. Isa. lxvi. 21; Gal. vi. 16. This blessing was no ceremony, or shadow to be abolished, but moral, and perpetual.

Fourthly, If the Lord Jesus in directing his disciples to pray, prescribe them a certain form of words, to be used, when he bids them Pray thus, or after this manner: and when they pray, say, then either Matthew, or Luke miss in Christ's intendment: for they, as all may see, record not the same certain form of words. If defence be made, that they speak of two several times, wherein Christ gave this direction, I answer such a man, that if that be granted, it makes against him: for Christ intended the same thing in both places, and at both times: whereupon it follows that the use of a certain form of words, was no part of Christ's intendment.

It is evident that these words of Christ, Pray thus, and When you pray, say, are a commandment, binding his

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church to the world's end, in all places, and at all times: and that When you pray, say, is as much as, whensoever, or at what time soever, you pray, say: as, when they deliver you up, Matt. x. 19, when one saith I am Paul's, &c. 1 Cor. iii. 4, when ye come together, &c. ch. xiv. 26, is as much as, when or at what time soever, they deliver you; whensoever one saith, I am Paul's: whensoever ye come together. And to let pass all other scriptures, in the sixth of Matthew where Christ delivers this form, and speaks of this, and the like matters, when thou givest thine alms, ver. 2, when thou prayest, ver. 5, when ye fast, ver. 16, that is, whensoever thou givest alms, fastest, or prayest. Whereupon it followeth necessarily, that, if Christ the Lord intended a set form of words, when he directed his disciples to pray, and bade them, When ye pray, say, then whensoever we pray, we must use that very form of words, and none other. For the words of Christ are not a permission, as the ministers insinuate, but an absolute commandment: neither is the question, as they untruly lay it down, whether it be lawful to use these very words in prayer, but whether it be necessary, and that when, or whensoever we pray: for that which Christ intends, he commands; and what he commands, he commands to be done, when, or whensoever we pray. And these things considered, it is no absurd objection, as these ministers make it, that we never read the apostles did use this prescript form of words in prayer. For reading of many forms of prayer they used, and never of this, we are assured that Christ did not stint them to this form of words, nor command them when they prayed to use them: for then they had sinned, when they prayed, and used them not.

Christ Jesus in the same place teacheth his disciples as well touching alms, and fasting, as prayer: and in particular, that when they fast, they should anoint their head, and wash their face. Matt. vi. 17. Now who is so ignorant as to affirm, that Christ's purpose herein is to bind them to these ceremonies? and why not as well, as to tie them to these very words? He saith as well, When thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face, as When thou prayest say, Our Father, &c. yea, touching prayer itself, he as

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well directs, and teacheth his disciples what, or how to do as what, or how to speak. He saith as well, When thou prayest, enter into the chamber, and shut the door, as When thou prayest, say, Our Father, ver. 6: as then the purpose of Christ in teaching his disciples, when they fast to anoint their head, and wash their face; and when they pray, to enter into their chamber, and to shut the door, is not to tie them to that very form of ceremony, but to advertise them to beware of all hypocrisy, and vain-glory in these things: so when he teacheth them to pray on this manner, his purpose is not to tie them to the very form of words, but to admonish them to beware of all vain babblings, and superstitious repetitions: and to ask in faith of God the Father, who knows their wants beforehand. ver. 7, 8.

Lastly, As we are commanded to pray the Lord's prayer, as it is called, so are we to preach the Word of God. 2 Tim. iv. 2. But as if a man take the Scriptures, and read them, or some part of them unto the people, or commit the same to memory, and so utter it, this is not preaching: so neither is the reading of this prescript, or repeating it by memory, praying. Indeed in preaching we must ever make the Scriptures our text, and groundwork, and must speak according unto them: and may take a verse, two, or more, and use them, even word for word, as they fit our occasion, and may be applied to our purpose: so in praying we must make this prescript ever, as it were, the text, and groundwork of our prayer, and must pray according unto it: and may use a petition, two, or more, or all in, or of it, even word for word, if so the Holy Ghost, by whose immediate teachings and suggestions all our requests must be put up, do direct us, and that we can apply the same words to our present occasions and needs. The same which I have said touching the preaching of the Word, may be added in respect of the administration of the sacraments.

The apostle writing to the Corinthians about the Lord's Supper, advertiseth them, that he received of the Lord, that which he delivered unto them. 1 Cor. xi. 23. Now he that looks into the three evangelists, that mention this institution, and compares either one of them with another,

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or Paul with any of them, he shall find, that the ordinance stands not at all in the prescript form of words, wherein they all differ each from others, Matt. xxvii. 26; Mark xiv. 22; Luke xxiii. 19. It is evident that the Lord administered this supper but once: and that in a certain form of words. And that which the Lord delivered unto his disciples, these four penmen of the Holy Ghost delivered to the churches. Now the great liberty, which they use in respect of forms of words, wherein they differ each from others, shows how little this institution and ordinance stands upon such stints: as also how far it is from the meaning of Christ, that the churches should be thus short-tied in the use of them. The same may be said of the ordinance of prayer, by Christ given to his church: wherein the two evangelists, that mention it, do use the same liberty: as most likely would the other two also have done, in respect of forms of words, had they made mention of it.

But grant that the words of Christ, Pray after this manner, and When you pray, say, are to be interpreted as these men would have it, yet do I except against their service-book in a double respect. The first is, that the reading of prayers upon a book hath no justification from them. If it be said, that to commit a certain form of words to the memory, and from it to utter them, and to read them upon a book, are all one, I deny the consequence: and though I approve not of the former, yet is the latter far the worse. For, besides that he that readeth, hath another speaking to him, as it were, even he whose writing he reads, and himself speaks not to God, but to the people, to whom he reads in the former, there is a kind of use, though not lawful, of the gift of memory: where in the other book-praying there is no use of that, or any other gift.

Secondly, It follows not, that because the Lord Jesus might impose a set form of words to be used for prayer, that therefore the lord bishops of England may impose another set form so to be used. The consequence is, notably, both erroneous and presumptuous. So bold, indeed, are they, and so high do they advance themselves in their ordinances and impositions! Because the Lord

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hath separated one day from the rest, and made it holy, therefore they will also make other holy days: because Christ hath set down canons, and constitutions for the government of his church, therefore they also will have their canons, and constitutions: because he hath appointed a form of administering the sacraments, therefore they may appoint another form, yea, and that such a one as altereth, and innovateth the very nature of the words of institution. For where Christ would have the words of institution published, and preached, "This is my body which is given for you," Luke xxii. 19; 1 Cor. xi. 24, they turn this preaching into a prayer, "The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto eternal life," &c., repeating the same also to every several communicant: which Christ would have pronounced once for all, according to the nature of the ordinance. And thus they will set their thresholds by the Lord's thresholds, and their posts by his posts, Ezek. xliii. 8: and rather than they will want room for their own, they will pare off part of his, yea, wholly demolish them. If the Lord Jesus appoint one ordinance for his church, they will appoint another: and surely, so they may lawfully: if they be, as they are reputed, and pretend themselves, lord bishops, and archbishops of the church, and spiritual lords, over God's heritage.

To these things I will add a few reasons against this read stinted service, and so conclude both the matter, and the book.

And first, It cannot be an ordinance of Christ, because the church may perfectly, and entirely worship God, without it, with all the parts of holy and spiritual worship; as did the apostolic churches for many years before any such liturgy was devised and imposed: and as do many churches now: and as appears by that which is done before and after sermons, where no such stint is read of, what may be done at all times, and in all places, where able and lawful ministers of the New Testament are.

Secondly, As the administrations of the public prayers of the church is a principal duty of the minister, for which a special gift and qualification is required, so cannot the reading of a service-book be that administration, because

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no special or ministerial gift is required for it. Isa. v. 6, 7; Matt. xxi. 13; Acts vi. 4.

Thirdly, The two feet upon which the dumb ministry stands, like Nebuchadnezzar's image upon the feet of iron and clay, Dan. ii. 33, are the Book of Common Prayer, and of Homilies: the reading of the former, which is the right foot, serving them for prayer, and of the other for preaching: which feet, if they were smitten as were the other, with the stone cut without hands, the whole idol priesthood would fall, and be broken in pieces, as that other image was. And here I would intreat them, that have written, and are persuaded so much against the reading of the Apocryphal books of the Maccabees, and those which follow them, in the congregation, especially them, which have so sufficiently dealt against Mr. Hutton* and his fellows, to turn the face of their arguments generally against the apocryphal service-book; and they will silence that book, as well, and as much, as the rest, like women in the church, as they speak.

Fourthly, As it were a ridiculous thing for a child, when he would ask of his father bread, fish, or any other thing he wanted, to read it to him out of a paper: so is it for the children of God, especially for the ministers of the gospel in their public ministrations, to read unto God their requests, for their own, and the church's wants, out of a service-book, wherein they are also stinted to words and syllables: by which also they, and the people with them, are under a greater dearth, than if they eat bread by weight, and drank water by measure. Ezek. iv. 16.

Lastly, If this use of the service-book be sanctified of God, for the public and solemn prayers of the church, and so deemed by these ministers and others, the forward people in the kingdom, what is the reason why they so seldom, yea or rather never, use the same, or any other of the like nature in their families, but do on the contrary lay aside all books save that of the Spirit, by whose alone and im-

* "An Answer to the Reasons for Refusal of Subscription to the Book of Common Prayer," &c., by Thomas Hutton, 4to., 1605 and 1606. "A Defence of the Ministers' Reasons for Refusal of Subscription," &c. &c., against the several answers of Thomas Hutton, Dr. Covell, Dr. Spark, 4to., 1607.

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mediate direction they are taught, and according to whose suggestions they do put up their supplications unto God? Do we not all know, that the more forward sort of professors would be ashamed of any such book-prayers in their families. And hath the Lord sanctified that for his house, which is not holy and good enough for their houses? Will they worship God with that worship publicly, whereof they are ashamed privately? Can private men bring forth the conceptions of the Spirit without the help of any such service-book, and do the lawful ministers of the gospel stand in need of it for the manifestation of the spirit of prayer given them, for the use and comfort of the church? "Cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing." Mal. i. 14. If these ministers then, and others, have a better sacrifice of prayer and thanksgiving, than their service-book, as their own practice both private and public, when they have liberty, shows they have, and that so themselves judge, let them learn to fear Him, that is a great King, and whose name is terrible, even the Lord of hosts. To him through Christ, the only Master and Teacher of his church, be praise for ever. He, even God the Father, for his Son Christ's sake, show his mercy in all our aberrations, and discover them unto us more and more; keep us in, and lead us into his truth: giving us to be faithful in that we have received, whether it be less or more; and preserving us against all those scandals, wherewith the whole world is filled. Amen.

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CHRISTIAN reader, whilst I was printing my defence against Mr. Bernard's invective, his reply came forth in a second treatise; to which I have also given answer in all the particulars which are of weight. And for that I have been occasioned by the one, and other book, to handle all the points in difference, I intreat thee to compare with this, my defence, such other oppositions especially as respect myself, whether in print or writing, till more particular answer be given.

END OF VOL. II.

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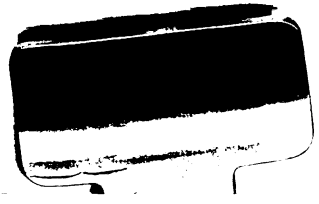

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